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Strategic Management Practices

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2016

Strategic Management Practices
An Investigation of Public Sector Organizations in the
Kingdom of Bahrain

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Abstract

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Strategic Management Practices: An Investigation of Public Sector Organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Keywords: Strategy, Strategic Planning, Strategic management, Leadership, Public Sector, Bahrain.

Over more than three decades, there has been a sustained interest in strategic planning in the public sector to secure positive outcomes and long-term growth. However, several authors argued that strategic planning is limited, costly, time consuming and not producing the needed outcomes.

Previous research has focused almost upon developed, and not on developing countries, for instance, the Kingdom of Bahrain. This gap in the knowledge provides the justification for this research.

Using survey method, this research aims to explore strategic management practices in the public sector of Bahrain. Using both interviews and questionnaires as the mixed methods was more convincing and produced more comprehensive findings and hence stronger credibility.

The findings reveal that the strategic management process was not effective in the researched organizations in the strategic formulation stage, the strategic implementation stage, and the strategic evaluation stage.

The findings also reveal that there is a low satisfaction level with strategic management process within most of the organizations surveyed. Moreover, the findings revealed that the progress in the transition from strategic planning to a strategic management approach was limited. However, some of the organizations were found to be at the start of such a transition and this may be a good sign. Additionally, the findings reported many leading edge elements that are closely related to this transition, and help to successfully implement organizational objectives. Finally, the present research is proposing a strategic management model to increase the ability to formulate, implement and evaluate better future governmental strategic plans.

Dedication

In the name of Allah

The most Beneficent, the most Merciful

**To the soul of my father and to the soul of my younger brother who both
passed away during this research (may Allah bless them).**

Acknowledgements

All thanks to Allah for his continuous help and support; we can achieve nothing without him. First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Professor Reza Abdi, for his invaluable humane, patient, and academic support. This research could only have been completed because of his unlimited assistance.

I would like to offer my deep love to my lovely mother for her prayers and encouragement. I want to express also my deep love to my lovely wife Amani for her support and patience and to my two sons Abdallah and Omar because of my long absence. I am particularly grateful to my close brother Osama and to my brave sister Siham for providing me with their love and care during difficult and tough circumstances. Special thanks to Dr. Eve Richards for her academic support and professional advice. Thanks a lot to Dr. Raed Bin Shams, General Manager of the Bahrain Institute for Public Administration and to all members of staff for their kind help and cooperation.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1. Introduction

Over more than three decades, there has been a sustained interest from both academics and professionals in strategic planning in the public sector (Aukaand Chepngeno 2016; Elbanna et al 2015; Stockwell and Casey 2016). Strategic planning can be seen in the public sector in the form of noteworthy management innovations which benefit from a highly structured, future-oriented management technique imported from the best practices of the private sector (Aldehayyat and Al Khattab 2013; Hendrick 2003; Poister et al 2013). However, the value of strategic planning and its use by the public sector in particular has been questioned by several authors (Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016; Joyce 2015; Lynch 2015; Porter 2008). Other, more critical, authors argue that the strategic planning process is limited, too costly, time consuming and not necessarily capable of producing strategies that create the needed outcomes (Mintzberg 2003; Mintzberg et al 1998; Poister 2010).

In today's increasingly challenging environment, it is argued that public sector organizations are expected to shift from traditional strategic planning to the strategic management approach (Plant 2009; Poister 2010). Strategic management is considered the most critical and fundamental process by which organizations may achieve their desired outcomes: however, very few governmental organizations have developed a fully-fledged and comprehensive strategic management process that seriously integrates all

the management processes and major functions for advancing the strategic agenda (Poister and Streib 2005; Rhys et al. 2012; Subba 2010).

Chapter One in the present thesis takes an overview of and defines strategic planning and strategic management: then it presents background information about the Kingdom of Bahrain. Next, the chapter addresses the problem, importance, objectives and questions of the present research. The chapter also describes the research methodology and reviews the literature. Finally Chapter one lists the research limitations and the organization of the thesis.

2. Strategic Planning and Strategic Management – Overview and Definitions

The literature records a theoretical debate about the relationship between strategic planning and strategic management, since it seems that the two terms have at times been used interchangeably (Kabir 2007; Jelenc 2009). To distinguish strategic planning, it is concerned with formulating strategy and with the future direction of the organization (Abosede et al. 2016; Murphy 2016). The purpose of strategic planning in the long term is to regularly enhance and promote strategic thinking, acting and learning (Boyne and Walker 2004; Ramírez and Selsky 2014). Strategic planning is defined in Bouhali (2015: 74) as:

“A road map to lead an organization from where it is now to where it would like to be in five or ten years”.

Strategic management, however, is considered an earlier stage of determining the organization's mission and goals within its own external and internal context (Kerlinová and Tomášková 2014; Kirovska 2011; Hacker et

al. 2001). The main aim of strategic management is to further the goals of an organization in three stages, namely, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation (Fard et al. 2011: Kabir 2007; Nickerson 2010). *Strategic management* is defined by David (2011: 6) as:

“The art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives”.

Strategic planning and strategic management are not the same: strategic planning is considered one of the important elements of strategic management, beside strategic formulation and strategic implementation, that ensure the integration of the organizational goals, policies and actions (Kabir 2007), thus developing a range of strategies that help organizations to re-align their future direction (Abosedo et al. 2016; Agwu and Awele 2015; Alqahtani 2016).

The present thesis investigates respondents' perceptions of the three stages of strategic management: the formulation of strategic plans, the implementation of the strategic plans, and the evaluation of these strategic plans.

3. Background Information: Kingdom of Bahrain

Bahrain, a name which means “Two Seas”, is a Muslim country, and has been ruled as a constitutional monarchy by the Sunni ruler, Sheikh Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, since 2002 (BBC News 2015: United Nations 2016). The total population of Bahrain is 1.4 million (BBC News 2015). Arabic is its primary language, and the Bahraini Dinar is the major currency (BBC News 2015: United Nations 2016). Bahrain is 717 sq km in area and its capital is Manama (BBC News 2015: United Nations 2016). The life expectancy for

men in Bahrain is 75 years and for women is 76 years (United Nations 2016). Bahrain was one of the first states to discover oil in the Gulf (see Figure 1). Bahrain pioneered oil production in the Middle East in 1932 and established the initial framework for the petroleum industry mainly in the Gulf region (Oxford Business Group 2016). Even so, Bahrain has never reached the oil production level enjoyed by Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, and hence, has been compelled to diversify its economy (Oxford Business Group 2016); this has led to Bahrain's becoming a chief financial center in the region (Oxford Business Group 2016). After energy, financial services continue to be the second-largest contributor to Bahrain's GDP, accounting for 16.5% of the total. This is followed by manufacturing, which accounts for 14.14% (Oxford Business Group 2016). Recently, Bahrain has launched various governmental and non-governmental schemes offering training, advisory services, infrastructural support and the financing of SMEs (United Nations 2016). Over the years, Bahrain has enjoyed increasing freedom of expression, and its human rights situation has improved (BBC News 2015).



Figure 1: Bahrain Maps – Source: Worldatlas

4. Research Problem

It is clear from the literature (Chaola et al. 2015; Daigneault 2016; Ferlie 1992; Schall 1997) that much work has been done by public sector organizations in a number of countries to examine strategic planning practices and see how they can enhance organizational outcomes. In the last three decades, public sector organizations have been adopting strategic planning practices, but little is known about the use made of strategic planning by these organizations or about the results of their plans (Poister and Streib 2005). Moreover, previous surveys (Bagire and Namada 2011; Berry and Wechsler 1995; Fairholm and Card 2009) indicates that many governmental organizations have made the effort to plan and manage strategically in order to produce positive results and outcomes, but the extent to which such efforts are worthwhile is not clear. Additionally, some studies (Bianchi and Salvatore 2015; Poister 2010) argue that the efforts of many governmental organizations to engage in strategic planning are wasted, because these organizations fail to identify and develop strategies which help to achieve the desired results; they also fail to put their strategic plans properly into action and to link them to suitable methods of implementation.

Given the above strategic planning problems and based on the literature (Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016; Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Sammor 2010), strategic planning as a field of research requires more development because it still has some limitations despite what has been written hitherto. Additionally, the literature suggests that the next decade (Plant 2009; Poister 2010) requires governments to shift from traditional strategic planning to the strategic management approach to overcome the problems of strategic

planning. Thus, the present research aims to explore managers' perception in the public sector of Bahrain regarding the adoption of the strategic management approach within their organizations to achieve the desired outcomes.

5. Research Importance and Objectives

It seems from the literature that previous strategic management research has focused almost exclusively upon developed countries such as the USA and the UK, as well as some emerging economies such as China, but not on developing countries in the Arab world, such as the Kingdom of Bahrain. This gap in the knowledge provides the importance and the justification for the present research. It is worth noting that, in the literature so far, no doctoral research has been conducted in the field of strategic management in Bahrain's public sector. This study will be the first of its kind; because it is one of the first studies to focus on these processes with the new strategy of Bahrain for 2030 in mind. It is also important to note that the main objective of the research proposed here is to investigate strategic management perception in public sector organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. More specifically, this research has the following detailed objectives:

1. To explore respondents' perception regarding the process of strategic formulation, implementation, and evaluation in governmental organizations in Bahrain.
2. To explore the elements that help in implementing a successful strategic management approach in these organizations.
3. To help address the sparseness of empirical evidence and practical implications by proposing a strategic management model, so as to

increase the ability of strategic planners and practitioners to formulate, implement and evaluate better strategic plans in the future.

With respect to the generalizability issue, Brouters et al (2000) cite several scholars who have suggested that managerial attitudes, values, behaviors, and efficacy differ across national cultures. Hence, organizational information needs to be gathered and interpreted flexibly. Since the sample populations in the present research are mostly middle managers coming from the same national culture and country, the findings from their governmental organizations can be generalized to other governmental organizations in Bahrain.

6. Research Questions

Drawing upon the general literature of strategic management, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

Question 1: *How were strategic planning processes developed, implemented and evaluated in the public sector organizations of the Kingdom of Bahrain?*

Question 2: *To what extent were public sector organizations broadening their strategic planning efforts into a strategic management approach?*

Question 3: *What are the practical implications for policy makers and practitioners engaged in strategic planning in the Kingdom of Bahrain?*

7. Research Methodology

The current research adopts structured interviews at an exploratory stage in order to sense the key issues in the strategic management practices of the government organizations in Bahrain before using a questionnaire to collect descriptive data (Saunders et al. 2009).

The present research adopted the survey design as a more appropriate strategy than any other because it would help the researcher to examine the relationships between the variables and to suggest and produce a model of these relationships (Saunders et al. 2009).

The present research adopted the survey in the form of cross-sectional research as the most appropriate research design because it best meets the research objectives and answers the research questions by comparing and constructing a population's beliefs or perceptions, and capturing any potential changes over a single period (Steadham 2006).

The targeted population sample comprised high-ranking officials from governmental organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. In terms of quantitative data collection, the researcher adopted a probability sampling technique, using the random selection method that guaranteed an equal probability of having any of the population as a participant (Doherty 2010). At the same time, non-probability sampling was adopted for the qualitative data collection using structured interviews as the qualitative research instrument. Using both interviews and questionnaires as mixed methods was more convincing and produced more comprehensive findings and hence stronger credibility (Bryman and Cassell 2006; Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009) than a single method would. Using mixed research methods helps to

obtain a more complete picture of the phenomenon, and gives deeper understanding of the research subject (Bryman and Cassell 2006; Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009).

In this research, the quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS software. The researcher followed all the necessary ethical procedures and processes to protect respondents' private information and responses.

8. Literature Review

The present research started with a comprehensive scrutiny of the relevant strategic planning and management literature, mainly regarding the public sector. Many of the available references were reviewed, including books, journal articles, academic papers and theses, reports, websites and newspapers. The main aim in studying the literature was to gain in-depth insight in the field of strategic planning and management and to understand its main theories. Moreover, it was hoped to learn what has already been studied in this field, how it had been researched, and what the key issues were (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009).

9. Research Limitations

In this thesis, as in all, it is important to address the research limitations. Using cross-sectional data may limit the attempt to generalize its findings, because this tends to disregard the time-frame for carrying out strategic planning, which is generally between three and five years. Another limitation is that the research addresses the perceptions of respondents rather than analyzing strategic management at the organizational level, as the perceptions of respondents may differ from what occurs in practice (Brouthers et al. 2000) this, of course, opens avenues for future research.

Moreover, the present research collected the data from top management, middle management and lower non-managerial employees as a single category without differentiation to overcome this limitation, this may also be considered an avenue for future research. Additionally, and as confirmed in the literature, developing an adequate system of financial resources and reward would enhance the motivation and loyalty of employees to successfully achieve both the strategic and the operational objectives of their organization. Nonetheless, it seems from the findings that most participants in the current research would work hard enough to achieve their objectives even under inauspicious financial conditions and reward systems. Such a result may derive from either cultural or personal motives and also suggests a worthwhile avenue for future research, given that the present research limits the investigation of such implications.

As well as the above limitations, the researcher experienced a number of difficulties in arranging more than nine interviews for a number of reasons. First, it was difficult to contact interviewees to arrange meetings: the researcher had on occasion to make several phone calls even to be able to speak to some managers. Second, many managers refused to attend an interview and informed the researcher that this was mainly due to the confidentiality of their information and their busy schedules. Other managers stated that they might consider participating in a survey questionnaire. Third, some managers agreed to participate but informed the researcher that the questions asked should not be specific but general and the interview should not be recorded. The above difficulties can confidently be discounted as limitations, because these refusals were certainly attributable to cultural and institutional factors.

Despite these limitations, the qualitative approach taken to nine interviews assisted the researcher to strengthen the validity of the research questionnaires by using a sequence of different methods. The initial qualitative research allowed research instruments to be developed, such as a questionnaire that could be used for large-scale quantitative research.

10. Organization of the Thesis

This DBA thesis is organized into five separate and interlinked chapters. Chapter One as an introductory chapter presents an overall view of the research and offers a background for the four other chapters. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature on strategic planning and management, mainly in the public sector. Chapter Three presents the design of the research, its methodology, data collection and data analysis. Chapter Four presents the quantitative findings that resulted from analyzing material from the questionnaires. Finally Chapter Five discusses the findings and limitations of the study, providing conclusions and suggesting directions for further research.

11. Chapter Summary

Strategic management is considered the most critical and fundamental process by which organizations may achieve their desired outcomes: however, very few governmental organizations have developed a fully-fledged and comprehensive strategic management process that seriously integrates all the management processes and major functions for advancing the strategic agenda. It is clear from the strategic planning and management literature that previous research has focused almost exclusively upon developed countries such as the USA and the UK, as well as such emerging economies as China, but not on developing countries in the Arab world, for instance, the Kingdom of Bahrain. This gap in the knowledge provides the justification for the present research. The main objective of the research proposed here is to investigate strategic management practices in the country's public sector organizations. More specifically, this research explores the strategic formulation, implementation, and evaluation process in governmental organizations in Bahrain, and then the research explores the elements that are related to successful strategic management approaches in these organizations. The present thesis adopts a descriptive design to provide information about the behavior, attitudes, and other characteristics of governmental employees in the public sector in question. It adopts cross-sectional research in the form of a questionnaire survey, as the most appropriate research design. The data collected from the qualitative interviews was analysed using NVIVO software, and the data collected from the quantitative questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS software.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

1. Introduction

From the 1980s to the present, public sector organizations around the world have been implementing a number of reforms to ensure governmental productivity, responsiveness and focus on performance (Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016; Elbanna 2013). Many public sector organizations set modernization and reform among their most important tasks, as a way of maintaining or restoring citizens' confidence (Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016; Chukayeva and Akzharov 2016). The direct product of these reforms is strategic planning (Chukayeva and Akzharov 2016; Drumaux and Goethals 2007; Joyce, 2015).

Many studies in the literature (Aldehayyat and Al Khattab 2013; Baile 1998; Cohen 2006; Stirbu 2011) have reported that strategic planning and more generally strategic management started in the private sector in the early 1960s. Many studies in the literature (Abraham 2005; Ahmad 2012, 2014) have also indicated that importing positive and successful strategic planning practices from the private sector to the public sector is vital for achieving the desired initiatives, goals and objectives, and enhancing organizational performance. Moreover, it is clear in the literature that applying strategic planning will secure positive outcomes and long-term growth, and sustain competitive advantage and profitability (Abosedo et al. 2016; Agwu and Awele 2015; Agyapong 2012 et al.), improving efficiency and effectiveness

and leading to the kind of good government which citizens want and deserve (Aldehayyat and Al Khattab 2013; Meyer 2016; Schall1997).

However, applying strategic planning in public sector organizations is not as easy as it might appear (Hacker et al. 2001; Joyce 2015). It is worth noting that the value of strategic planning and its use by the public sector in particular has been questioned by several authors (Bianchi and Salvatore 2015; Poister 2010). Other critical authors argue that in today's fast-paced and competitive environment a strategic planning process is limited, too costly and time consuming and does not necessarily produce strategies which create the required outcomes (Fairholm 2009; Glassman 2005; Kissler et al.1998).

The present chapter addresses organizational strategy, strategic planning and the strategic management. The chapter then addresses the importation of strategic planning from the private sector to the public, the value of strategic planning in the public sector, the strategic planning in the Arab Gulf States, and an overview of the public sector in Bahrain. Moreover, Chapter Two considers strategic planning approaches, models, processes, barriers, and successfactors. Finally the chapter looks at the strategic management process and draws some conclusions.

2. Strategy, Strategic Planning and Strategic Management: Theoretical Debates

Public sector organizations aim to help nations to meet their objectives, solve their problems and improve the quality of people's lives. The obligation of public sector organizations, which serves as a general guide for their actions, is to promote citizens' interests and values. It is worth noting that public value is created through producing policies, projects and

programmes, services and infrastructures at a reasonable cost. However, there is little consensus on ways for public sector organizations to produce these things or routes to their success (Bouhali 2015; Shahin 2011; Kerlinová and Tomášková 2014).

Joyce (2015) claims that the public sector needs to adopt effective strategies to achieve its strategic and operational objectives. He adds that decision makers are expected to put more effort into the preparation of plans and strategies that would enable public sector organizations to choose strategic alternatives for coping with today' dynamic changes in the environment. Moreover, Joyce has claimed that top management is also expected to collect and update data on a regular basis and to work to formulate effective strategies. Joyce has also argued that public sector organizations play an important role in the development process in the community, thus attention and work are required to improve their organizational performance by using modern management methods, including strategic management, to achieve their goals and to properly adapt to change. Strategic management, according to Joyce, is considered a tool for determining the direction of an organization and its long-term objectives through the formulation of strategies that help its goals and objectives to be attained.

With this in mind, the theoretical debate in terms of strategy, strategic planning and strategic management may be set out as follows.

2.1 Strategy

Strategy was considered by Peter Drucker in 1954 as the processes of creating an achievable mission and setting clear goals and objectives (Doherty 2010; Zahra 2003). Drucker as a strategy theorist set the

importance of managing by objectives (MBO) and stressed the need to set objectives to monitor the progress of the entire organization from top to bottom. In 1980 Henry Mintzberg, a famous strategy theorist, also described strategy from five different perspectives: first, as a plan that helps achieve objectives; second as a trick for competing against smart rivals; third, as a pattern for achieving organizational goals and objectives; fourth, as a comfort zone; and finally as a vision showing where the organization would like to be in the future (Doherty 2010; Wheelen and Hunger 2012). Mintzberg went on to extend his work by differentiating between two types of strategy. First he discussed intended strategy (planned strategy) and unintended strategy (not part of the original strategy, but emerging with need): second came realized strategy (intended or unintended strategies that were actually implemented) and its opposite, unrealized strategy (Doherty 2010; Mintzberg 2007; Wheelen and Hunger 2012).

Michel Porter, according to Wheelen and Hunger (2012), considered strategy as a broad-based formula with which organizations could compete in the marketplace, be aware of its goals, and know how to achieve those goals. Porter developed the well-known five forces model to assess competitive advantages in organizations. He argued that, in order to gain competitive advantage, an organization needs to perform its activities differently from its rivals in order to successfully survive in the market place.

The root of strategy is “strategos”, which is the Greek word for ‘soldier’, connoting army and leadership (Elbanna 2008). Elbanna argues that strategy is considered by many people to refer to a plan or set of actions for deploying resources in a particular context to fulfill long-term goals. It is

worth noting that in Elbanna's view the chosen strategy should answer two important questions: Where do we want to go? and how can we get there? Doherty (2010) also described strategy as a framework that determines the nature of the organization and shapes its future direction, stressing that strategy and strategic planning should begin with vision and mission. Moreover, Cohen (2006) claimed that governmental organizations thought of strategy as a plan and roadmap for achieving the organization's long-term vision, mission, goals and objectives. Plant (2009) also remarked that in governmental organizations the need for strategy means that organizations should have a unique position from which to deliver a customized service driven by the needs of their customers and businesses.

Johnson et al. (2013) argued that strategy is a key issue in the future welfare of organizations, and is considered a very important element in the organization's success or failure. Strategy, according to Johnson et al., determines how to respond to change, how to innovate and how to grow in a competitive environment. Moreover, Johnson et al. claimed that present or future leaders must properly shape, communicate, and implement these strategies to ensure organizational success. Johnson et al. (2013: 3) define strategy as:

"The long-term direction of an organization".

Strategy is also defined by Alfred Chandler (cited in Johnson et al., 2013: 4) as:

"The determination of the long-run goals and objectives of an enterprise and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals".

Strategy is defined by Michael Porter (cited in Johnson et al., 2013: 4) as

“About being different ... it means deliberately choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value”.

Strategy is also defined by Henry Mintzberg (cited in Johnson et al., 2013: 4) as:

“A pattern in a stream of decisions”.

Johnson et al. in their book *Exploring Strategy* claimed that their definition of strategy has two advantages over the definitions by Alfred Chandler, Michael Porter, and Henry Mintzberg, the three leading strategy theorists. First, according to Johnson et al., the long-term direction of the organization includes logical strategy and the emergent pattern of strategy: and second, long-term direction can include both competitive and imitative strategies.

2.2 Strategic Planning

Fooladvand et al. (2015: 951) defined strategic planning as:

“The process of setting the organization goals and making decisions about comprehensive operational and administrative plans to fulfill those purposes”.

Strategic planning is also defined In Bouhali (2015: 74) as:

“A road map to lead an organization from where it is now to where it would like to be in five or ten years”.

Strategic planning is seen as a written document that includes a timeframe, mission statement, environmental assessment, goals and objectives, action plans, financial plan, a planning horizon for more than one year, and the timing that will adequately cover the strategic plan (Wart 2014; Wheelen and Hunger 2012).

It is worth noting that Ansoff in 1965 invented new concepts and terminology in the classic literature on strategic planning (Doherty 2010; Jobber 2007). Strategy and strategic planning are described by him with the concept of a strategy grid and long-range planning in order to achieve five aims: market penetration, product development, market development, differentiation, and vertical and horizontal integration. Ansoff wants organizations to systematically prepare to benefit from future opportunities and to minimize future threats. Moreover, he develops the concept of Gap Analysis to help organizations to understand the gap between the present organizational position and the desired future position and then to talk about the actions needed to plug this gap. He designed a sequence of processes to help managers handle strategic decisions. Mintzberg also stressed that strategic planning came originally from Chinese history but was most evident in the work of Henry Fayol in 1949. Mintzberg questions the conventional definition of strategic planning, doubting if there is a relationship between strategy and planning or whether strategy should be considered a process of planning. He also questions whether strategy should be always planned, or sometimes planned, or never planned (Doherty 2010; Mintzberg 2007; Wheelen and Hunger 2012).

Strategic planning is considered a continuous assessment of the current strategy developed by top management in order to analyze over the long term the internal and the external environment in order to identify the internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats (Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016; Doherty 2010). Moreover, strategic planning helps organizations to think carefully and systematically in achieving their objectives: to develop effective strategies, proper decision-

making processes, better performance, clear goals, increase the satisfaction of employees: and effectively anticipate future problems and opportunities (Abdalkrim 2013; Almani and Majid 2011; Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016) Additionally, Ofori and Atiogbe (2012) argue that strategic planning helps organizations to stay competitive while aligning their resources in the most efficient manner.

Moreover, several authors (Abdalkrim 2013; Cohen 2006; Janaki et al; 2012 Snyder 2016) also argue the important idea that strategic planning may be considered a road map. It gives organizations a clear idea for successfully moving from their position today to the position where they should be tomorrow. Additionally, Junusbekova (2013) claims that strategic planning aims to foresee prospects, to strike a balance between objectives and possibilities, to ensure proper resource allocation, to adapt to current conditions, to implement long-term programs, and to ensure high efficiency and future competitiveness.

In other words, strategic planning is generally described as a systematic process that asks and answers the most important questions about ways of linking objectives to actions, of providing the required resources to achieve these objectives, of linking present circumstances to a more meaningful future vision, and of linking vision to reality (Chen et al. 2015; Dougherty 2016;Itani et al. 2014).

2.3 Strategic Management

In terms of strategic management, several authors (Agwu and Awele 2015; Mapetere et al. 2012; Meyer 2016) have considered strategic management as the most critical and fundamental process for public sector organizations in achieving their desired outcomes. However, Jelenc (2009) claimed that

the central art of effective strategic management is judged to be a proper integration of strategy formulation and strategy implementation. Jelenc reported that there are four schools of strategic management. The first is *the Classical School*. Its aim is to fit between the organizational factors and the external environment of an organization and to capture success by finding what the organization is good at and matching it with the needs of different stakeholders. The main goal of this school is profitability, which can be achieved through separating the formulation process from that of implementation. The second school is the *Environmental* one, based on the idea that the internal environment factors of the organization are key factors when creating and implementing strategy. This school presents all the reactive and passive ways of correlating the past with the future. The third school is the *Competitive* one which is mainly concerned with competition as the key to organizations' success through differentiating themselves from others and benefiting from differences. This view is based on the idea that organizations should develop their competitive advantages to effectively compete in the marketplace. Jelenc (2009) argues that competitive advantage will be achieved from connecting the organization with its environment. The fourth school is the *Contemporary* one, based on the idea that competition weakens all the competitors in the marketplace: in response, this school suggests that organizations should learn how to distinguish themselves from others, collaborate with competitors and find every possible way of winning or surviving (Jelenc 2009).

However, Doherty (2010) argues that strategy and strategic planning lack decisive definition because many studies use heterodox techniques, approaches, practices and designs when exploring the broad area of

strategy and strategic planning. Doherty (2010) argues that organizations should coordinate and organize the various disconnected functions of management under one comprehensive strategy as a material plan that shapes the organization's future. Still, Doherty claims that strategic planning should be viewed as a perpetual process of coordinating organizational strategy that needs clear focus, structure and the direction of strategic management. At the same time, the literature according to Kabir (2007) records a theoretical debate about the relationship between strategic planning and strategic management, since it seems that the two terms have at times been used interchangeably.

Strategic management is defined in Al Hijji (2014:10) as:

"An ongoing process concerned with the identification of strategic goals, vision, mission and objectives of an organization along with an analysis of its current situation, [to] develop appropriate strategies, put these strategies into action, and evaluate, modify or change these strategies when needed".

Strategic management is also defined by Wheelen and Hunger (2012: 5) as:

"A set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the long-run performance of a corporation".

Strategic management is defined in Bagire (2011:72) as:

"The process by which general managers of complex organizations develop and use a strategy to co-align their organization's competencies, opportunities and constraints in the environment".

Strategic management moreover is defined by David (2011: 6) as:

"The art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives".

It is clear from the literature, then, that strategic planning and strategic management are not the same to most writers (Kabir 2007). Strategic planning is properly considered a key aspect of strategic management which ensures the integration of the organizational goals, policies and actions (Kabir 2007).

There is in fact a vigorous theoretical debate in the literature about the relationship between strategic planning and strategic management (Jelenc 2009; Poister 2010). Strategic planning, to distinguish it, is concerned with formulating strategy and with the future direction of the organization (Hacker et al. 2001; Poister 2010). The purpose of strategic planning in the long term is to regularly enhance and promote strategic thinking, acting and learning (Polowczyk 2012; Poister 2010; Ramírez and Selsky 2014). Strategic planning encourages people to think of the consequences, analyze objectives, objectively assess values and priorities and identify needed actions, by such means ensuring organizational effectiveness and vitality which add value in the public mind (Bryson 2014; Poister 2010; Subba 2010). Strategic management, however, is considered an earlier stage of determining the organization's mission and goals within its own external and internal context (Kerlinová and Tomášková 2014; Kirovska 2011). Strategic management contains the process of creating strategic plans and the activities needed to achieve defined goals and objectives (Hacker et al. 2001). The main aim of strategic management is to further the goals of an organization in three stages, namely, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation (Abosede et al. 2016; Agwu and Awele 2015; Fard et al. 2011; Nickerson 2010).

Kabir (2007) argued that strategic planning and strategic management are not the same; strategic planning is considered one of the important elements of strategic management, beside strategic formulation and strategic implementation. Strategic formulation precedes strategic planning and strategic planning precedes strategic implementation: however, strategic planning and strategic implementation may overlap and this may lead to debate and confusion (Kabir 2007). Moreover, strategic planning is considered a key aspect of strategic management, ensuring the integration of the organization's goals, policies and actions (Kabir 2007), thus developing a range of strategies that help organizations to re-align their future direction (Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016; Bryson et al. 2014;Daigneault 2016).

It should be noted that the present research investigates the strategic management practices in the public sector organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain but not their strategic planning process. The research explores respondents' perceptions of the three stages of strategic management: the formulation of strategic plans, the implementation of the strategic plans, and the evaluation of these strategic plans.

3. Importing Strategic Planning from the Private Sector to the Public Sector: the Theoretical Debate

It is worth noting that many studies (Hendrick 2003; Janaki et al. 2012; Kabir 2007) report that strategic planning and more generally strategic management started in the private sector with descriptive analyses of strategies and the formulation of strategies and their environment. It is also worth noting that,for more than 30 years, before strategic planning was

ever introduced in the public sector, planning was emphasized more in local government organizations than governmental ones (Elbanna 2013; Nurmandi and Purnomo 2011). According to Nurmandi and Purnomo (2011), the strategic planning process in the public sector has evolved over the past few years on the basis of approaches developed by such authors as Bryson (1995), Nutt and Backoff (1992), and Koteen (1989). These approaches chiefly assess internal strengths and weaknesses, analyze external opportunities and challenges, clarify missions and values, vision development, the development of strategic goals and objectives, the development and evaluation of alternative strategies and the creation of action plans. Moreover, Nurmandi and Purnomo claim that there has been a debate regarding the scope of strategic planning in the public sector, its approach, its content, and the involvement and participation of the staff concerned.

Several studies (Marin 2012; Joyce 2015; Nartisa et al. 2012) argue that it is important to study the significant differences between the public and private sectors, such as their profit or non-profit purpose, political influences, laws, responsibilities, regulations, competition, resources, authorities, performance measurements, and desired outcomes. Moreover, some studies in the literature (Cohen 2006; Gantick and Lipe 2002; Schall 1997) have shown the importance of distinguishing between the two sectors and how the public sector can adopt successful strategic planning practices from the private sector. These studies indicate that today's changing and dynamic environment is forcing every organization in both sectors to re-examine and redesign its strategic plan: thus, it is vital to compare the public and private sectors. Such a comparison benefits public sector organizations which can

then introduce successful strategic planning practices from private organizations and also identify and describe the factors which cause the process of strategic planning to be unique, whichever sector it is in (Birkmann et al. 2014; Dhliwayo et al. 2011; Dominguez et al. 2009).

Marin (2012) asserted that strategic planning is applicable in the public sector just as it is in the private sector. Kenville (2005) also argues that both private and public sectors shared such goals as achieving a high level of customer service, and properly managing financial and nonfinancial resources; they argue, however, that strategic planning should be applied with care in the public sector. Baile (1998) argued that public and private organizations are very similar and that management roles and processes can be transferred between the two. Baile in his research seeks to show that strategic planning processes developed for private organizations can be adapted to public organizations. Baile finds that importing strategic planning from private to public organizations requires the careful consideration of the differences in context when planning is done. Baile believes that these differences not only affect the design and completion of the planning process, but also affect the difficulty of implementing plans and the ultimate success of the organization. Additionally, Backoff et al (1993) indicate that importing positive and successful strategic planning practices from the private to the public sector is vital for achieving the desired initiatives, goals and objectives.

In contrast, Cohen (2006) argues that public sector organizations have and serve more diverse stakeholders than do private ones. Cohen claims that the strategic planning of public sector organizations should not be judged under the same standards as the strategic planning of private sector

organizations. This contradicts the view of the above studies that strategic planning practices from private sector organizations can be applied to public sector organizations. Moreover, Stirbu (2011) claims that public sector organizations may be generally described as reactive instead of proactive, change resistant and slow to react to the changes in their external environment; hence, it is difficult to identify and develop strategic issues which resemble those of organizations in the private sector. At the same time, Kenville (2005) argued that in the private sector there is an executive who entirely controls each organization and has the freedom to identify its present and future core business. He also contended that the private sector is in a more competitive environment and that profit is the core factor for planning requirements. However, Kenville claimed that executives in the public sector have limited control and freedom, constrained by governmental rules and regulations. Kenville also argued that competition does not exist for them and that the core driver in determining business requirements is not profit, but the maximization of outputs within the given budget systems.

Given the above debates, it is important to explore whether strategic planning is of value in public sector organizations.

4. Is Strategic Planning of Value in the Public Sector?

Hacker et al (2001) indicated that applying strategic planning will secure positive outcomes and long-term growth and sustain competitive advantage and profitability. However, it is not as easy to take a strategic planning approach in public sector governmental organizations as might be supposed (Hacker et al. 2001). The claims for strategic planning, as a topic under current debate, have been generally unconvincing for several researchers

(Kenville, 2005). Berry and Wechsler (1995) claimed that strategic planning has failed to help organizational leaders develop vision, mission and strategy. According to Kissler et al (1998), the value of strategic planning in general has been questioned by several authors, as has its use by the public sector in particular. Its critics argue that in the modern fast-paced and competitive environment, the process of strategic planning is too costly and time consuming and it does not necessarily produce strategies that make the needed difference (Kerlinová and Tomášková 2014).

However, several studies (Birkmann et al. 2014; Dhliwayo et al. 2011; Duren 2010) rejoin that even if these criticisms are justified in the private sector, strategic planning can be considered an effective management tool for public sector organizations where the pace of change is slower than for private organizations, and where inclusive processes are important for widespread acceptance. These studies indicate that strategic planning would help to facilitate communication and participation, accommodates divergent values and interests, and also promote the making and carrying out of successful decisions. Moreover, despite the concern over the value of strategic planning in the public sector, some authors (Birkmann et al. 2014; Junusbekova 2013; Meyer 2016; Stockwell and Casey 2016) argue that strategic planning has helped to improve the performance of public sector organizations, has provided a general framework for the development of public policy, and has produced considerable benefits to public sector organizations if it uses the *bottom-up* approach that involves internal staff in the process as well as engaging the wider public in generating new ideas and insights.

5. Strategic Planning in the Arab Gulf States

It is clear from the literature that much work has been done by public sector organizations in several countries to examine strategic planning practices and see how they could enhance outcomes for public sector organizations (Bagire and Namada 2011; Berry and Wechsler 1995; Fairholm and Card 2009). It also seems from the literature that previous research has focused almost exclusively upon developed countries such as the USA and the UK, as well as some emerging economies such as China, and not on developing countries in the Arab world (Aldehayyat and Al Khattab 2013; Alqahtani 2016; Elbanna 2013). Although there is a huge gap in the strategic planning literature of the Arab world, a few serious attempts have been made to bridge this gap by examining its strategic planning processes, mainly the Gulf Countries (Shahin 2011; Elbanna 2010; Neal 2010). Khan and Buarki (1992) conducted a study on the Kingdom of Bahrain, targeting both private and public organizations to assess the planners' familiarity with and awareness of strategic planning tools. The findings of this study showed that 22% of the selected organizations used around ten of the same strategic planning tools, and that 17% of these claimed to have used more than these ten. The findings of this study also revealed that 61% of the respondents were either unaware of or had never used these shared tools and they required development programs that would effectively help them to identify and use strategic planning tools and techniques.

Al Shaikh (2001) has also conducted a study of 131 organizations in the United Arab Emirates to investigate the presence or absence of strategic planning, assess the relationships between strategic planning and organizational characteristics and explore the staff involvement in setting up

strategic planning. The findings of the study show that many organizations have weak strategic planning practices because they do not all believe in the value of it. Only 10% of the surveyed companies had used strategic planning: indeed, some of them seem to have had a poor understanding of the practices of strategic planning, and the vast majority of these companies have no specific and measurable objectives. The findings of the study also suggest that, as a result of cultural and environmental factors, there is little significant difference between small and large organizations in terms of planning orientation.

Another two studies were conducted on two Arab countries by Elbanna (2008, 2009) to examine the relationship between strategic planning practice, management participation and strategic planning effectiveness in private organizations in Egypt and private and public organizations in the United Arab Emirates. The findings from the two studies reveal that management participation in the Arab world does not contribute to the effectiveness of strategic planning, due to other variables such as organizational culture, which may moderate the effectiveness of strategic planning.

Another study on the Gulf States by Yusuf and Saffu (2009) was conducted to examine the planning practices, types of strategy, and organizational performance in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. The findings of this study reveal that most of the organizations under review do not have a proper planning process, and there are no significant differences between planning in young organizations and those in mature organizations. According to this finding, Yusuf and Saffu argued that the intensity of planning in older organizations diminishes slightly, while small organizations

have a higher intensity of planning than any others. They claimed that such a result was due to cultural differences and not the result of business practices.

Elbanna (2010) studied the nature and practice of strategic planning in the United Arab Emirates. His study had several aims: to explore whether strategic plans were written or not and the time taken in preparing these plans; to explore the views of and attitudes to the importance of strategic planning; to examine the strategic planning tools employed by the researched organizations; and to assess the level of staff involvement in the strategic planning process at different levels within the organization. It is an important finding of this study that 17.7% of the researched organizations did not have written strategic plans. Regarding the time taken to prepare the strategic plan, around one-third of the organizations said that they spent one to four months on the task. The findings also reveal that large organizations required more time than did small ones for preparing their strategic plans. Moreover, the study showed that environmental uncertainty is considered one of the main barriers to the strategic planning process whereas the availability of resources is not. The study concluded that the most frequently used strategic planning tools were financial statements, cost-benefit analysis, and SWOT analysis. The study also revealed that the staff involvement in the strategic planning process was limited to top and middle managers, while the involvement of lower ranking employees and external stakeholders was very weak. Additionally, regarding the attitudes to the importance of strategic planning, most respondents in this study had a strong belief that strategic planning was important and would produce positive outcomes for their organization. This result, according to Shahin

(2011), contradicts the findings by Al Shaikh (2001) that many organizations have weak strategic planning practices because not all organizations believe in the value of strategic planning in the first place. According to Shahin, this contradictory finding may be due to the length of time between the two studies.

Shahin (2011) conducted an interesting doctoral study (a) to examine the process of setting up strategic planning in 22 public sector organizations in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates; (b) to evaluate the influence of external and internal organizational barriers on the strategic planning formulation process; (c) to evaluate the quality of the strategic planning document produced and its association with the planning process; and finally (d) to assess the determinants of the planning horizon within the research context. This doctoral research revealed many important findings. Shahin claimed that the public sector organizations in Dubai have chosen a highly formal planning process and that 85% of the research sample had written strategic planning documents. Shahin argues that such a finding matches previous studies, which showed that many organizations in the UAE believe in the value of strategic planning. The findings also show that there is a significant correlation with all the steps of the strategic planning process. The findings of this study also suggest that the formation of strategic planning is influenced by the factors of size, age, and organization level as well as the existence of strategic planning units within organizations. Moreover, the findings suggest that the formality of the process for large organizations in Dubai's public sector is higher than for small organizations, because large organizations are more complex in structure, and this makes effective coordination very difficult. Additionally, the findings report that planning

formality is higher in young organizations than in mature ones and also significantly higher in Dubai's public sector at corporate level than at departmental level. The findings also indicate a positive correlation between process formality and the implementation of strategies and plans. The findings conclude that there was no significant correlation between external barriers and the formality of the strategic planning process, except for younger organizations where external barriers such as the macro economy and a turbulent environment tend to be significantly higher than for mature organizations. Moreover, the findings conclude that there is a strong negative correlation between internal barriers (organizational culture, weak strategic thinking, and employees' resistance to change) and the formality of the strategic planning process for both small and large organizations, and also for young organizations. Such negative correlation was found to be higher at departmental level than corporate level, and also higher for organizations that have strategic planning units but not in organizations that do not. In addition, the findings report that the higher the formality of the strategic planning the better the quality of the strategic plans produced. The findings also conclude that the formality of the strategic planning process is influenced by a planning time horizon which is determined by, among other things, organizational size, level, and the availability of strategic planning units, but not by the organization's age. The last finding is that the strategic planning formation process in Dubai's public sector organizations tends to be effective in terms of the formality of the process and the quality of the strategic plans produced, but according to Shanin, having a formalized planning process does not necessarily lead to planning nor the production of

required strategies. Conversely, organizations may engage in planning without any formalized planning process (Shahin 2011).

Elbanna (2013) has conducted an important study which is the first to explore the processes and impacts of strategic management in the public sector bodies of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), both federal and local. The study has several objectives: to explore the way in which public sector organizations in the UAE formulate, implement, and evaluate their strategic plans; to identify the strategic management tools that most heavily impact on strategic planning; and finally to explore the strategic planning outcomes and success factors in the UAE's public organizations. It should be noted that this study sampled 67 governmental organizations (43% federal, 57% local) targeting middle and top management officials. The findings of this study show that in the last few years strategic planning practices have been considered a centerpiece in the UAE's reform of public management, even though the strategic management process in the UAE at the beginning of this century was weak and public organizations seemed not to take strategic management seriously or to practice it properly. This study also reported that both federal and local governmental organizations in the UAE were fully aware of strategic planning tools and were using the Balanced Scorecard as their framework for strategic planning. Moreover, the study reports that all the sampled organizations (100%) had written strategic plans and great use was made of strategic management processes in the UAE's governmental organizations. The study also shows that there were very few variations in strategic management practices between federal and local organizations, and that this practice in consequence had high positive impacts. Finally, the study concludes that, beyond strategic planning itself, the sampled

organizations in this study were focusing on the broader strategic management process, but required extra time and effort to effectively carry it out completely (Elbanna 2013).

To sum up, it is clear in the literature that applying a strategic planning process will help to achieve the desired initiatives, goals and objectives and enhance organizational performance. Many studies, as noted above, state that public sector organizations if they want to prosper should adopt strategic planning as an effective tool of strategic management. However, while strategic planning is considered useful and important, it is at the same time limited. Previous surveys have indicated that many governmental organizations strive to plan and manage strategically in order to produce positive results and outcomes, but it is not clear how worthwhile such efforts are. Moreover, some studies, as mentioned above, argue that the efforts of many governmental organizations to engage in strategic planning are wasted, because these organizations fail to identify and develop strategies which help to achieve the desired results: they also fail to put their strategic plans properly into action and to link them to suitable methods of implementation. In addition, several authors have questioned the value of strategic planning in the public sector. They claimed that the strategic planning process is too costly and time consuming and moreover that it produces strategies that do not necessarily result in the needed outcomes. As today's dynamic environment is leading responsible public sector organizations to re-examine and redesign their strategic planning process; applying strategic planning in public sector organizations is not as easy as it might appear.

6. Overview of the public sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain

The last few decades have seen uneven efforts to reform, since, according to the Arab World Competitiveness Report 2013 published by the World Economic Forum and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), many countries in the Arab region over the last few years have made a political and economic transition: thus, political leaders have had to decide on the future economic direction of their countries in order to meet the aspirations of their citizens. According to the report, such transitions need strong leadership which shares its political and economic vision to navigate the countries in the Arab region through today's changing and uncertain times. In this report, Nada Azmi sums up Bahrain's achievements in the area of competitiveness by saying that the Kingdom of Bahrain over the last decade has conducted economic and social reforms, such as efforts to boost transparency in the civil service, the removal of impediments to foreign investment, membership of the Gulf countries' customs union based on low tariffs, a free trade agreement with the United States, reforms in the labor market, the liberalization of the telecommunications industry, the establishment of a telecommunications market regulator, and improvements to public education. Azmi adds that Bahrain was seen as one of the first of the Gulf countries to discover oil and to benefit from the oil boom. It should be remembered, he goes on, that Bahrain shares many features of the oil-based economies and relies heavily on oil revenues. Bahrain has a large public sector staffed by Bahraini nationals, while its many foreign employees are concentrated in the private sector. Because of the highly competitive environment regionally and

globally and the diminishing oil reserves, however, the government of Bahrain is about to face many challenges (Azmi 2013; BBC News 2015; Oxford Business Group 2016; United Nations 2016). Its government has diverted its earnings to other economic sectors, taking into account that it is now considered as an important onshore and offshore financial center for the Gulf countries, and has had remarkable success in developing other economic sectors such as tourism and banking (Azmi 2013; United Nations 2016). Nowadays, the government of Bahrain is aiming to gradually shift its focus to generating sound and forward-looking policies in critical areas, such as the economy and finance, health care, education, environment, security and social justice (Azmi 2013; United Nations 2016). It aims also to enlarge its international experience by reducing costs, increasing the quality of public service by outsourcing certain non-core government tasks, building strong strategic operations and implementation-focused capabilities, actively seeking partnerships with the private sector, establishing effective and efficient regulations, reducing the dependence on oil revenues, and forging world-class infrastructure links to the global economy (Azmi 2013; Oxford Business Group 2016). With these aims in view, the government of Bahrain in 2008 created a new economic vision for 2030 of attaining a high level of competitiveness in the global economy. This vision is based on a sound knowledge of the factors that determine prosperity, be they in the area of the economy, government or society (Azmi 2013). Between 2000 and 2012, Bahrain witnessed rapid economic development with a growth of real output averaging 5.0% per year (Azmi 2013). Despite an unusually uncertain global economic situation, 2012 proved a year of steady consolidation for the Bahraini economy: the industrial structure became more diverse, with both

manufacturing and services expanding more rapidly than GDP as a whole (Azmi 2013). The government of Bahrain, one of the regions' pioneering nations, realizes that ongoing structural reform is crucial to ensure continual improvements in living standards; consequently, it has now put it foremost in Bahrain's policy (Azmi 2013: BBC News 2015: Oxford Business Group 2016). The country now finds itself at a defining moment when its future prosperity depends on whether it can change significantly on many levels in order to keep pace with the world (Azmi 2013: BBC News 2015: Oxford Business Group 2016: United Nations 2016). Bahrain needs to swiftly transform its economy, to acquire the right skills, and to boost productivity and innovation (Azmi 2013: BBC News 2015: Oxford Business Group 2016: United Nations 2016).

The above debate suggests highlighting the strategic planning approaches, models, process, barriers, and successful factors, and then the strategic management process.

7. Strategic Planning Approaches, Models, Process, Barriers, and Successful Factors

The strategic planning approaches, models, process, barriers, and factors for their success are as follows.

7.1 Strategic Planning Approaches

Kabir (2007) reported three strategic planning approaches: the Synoptic, the Vision and the Strategic Issues approaches. The three approaches may be described as follows.

7.1.1 The Synoptic approach

This approach to strategic planning is based on conscious efforts from the top management to integrate the overall organizational strategy based on their decisions, in order to ensure the development of accurate and integrated plans. Kabir said that such an approach, according to Mintzberg (1994), is seen as a set of formalized procedures to produce articulated results in the form of integrated decisions. Kabir also reported that this approach, according to Bryson (1995), tends mostly to be successfully employed when organizations have a very narrowly defined mission. Although the synoptic approach to strategic planning, in Mintzberg's view, has the main limitation of being pre-determined, still this approach, according to Kabir, would be applicable to the extent that organizations have manageable levels of conflict with other stakeholders.

7.1.2 The Vision approach

The Vision approach is considered an alternative to the Synoptic approach. Kabir reported Roberts's formulation (2000) that in this approach the top management of an organization is providing its stakeholders with very general and broad guidance about itself. Kabir added that this approach, according to Mintzberg (1994), acknowledges that strategy emerges as a bottom-up process. However, Kabir argued that the Vision approach to strategic planning is generally used in research and development organizations.

7.1.3 The Strategic Issues approach

The Strategic Issues approach, according to Kabir, is widely used and successfully adopted by governmental municipalities and communities. Kabir

added that this approach requires limited agreement by organizational officials on some strategic issues, and does not demand a comprehensive integration of goals and sub-goals. Moreover, Kabir reported Roberts' view (2000) that the strategic Issues approach takes the middle ground between the political and rational models of decision making.

These three approaches, according to Kabir, clearly indicate that strategic planning is considered a systematic process that provides long-term direction to organizations seeking to attain their objectives, actions and priorities. However, it could be argued that strategic planning formation is different when the context and situations are different (Kabir 2007).

7.2 The Strategic Planning Models

The following strategic planning common models may provide alternatives for public sector organizations to choose from in order to develop their strategic planning process (Kriemadis and Theakou 2007; Kristamuljana 2011; Nieboer 2011).

7.2.1 The Basic Model

Ofori and Atiogbe (2012) claim that the basic strategic planning model was designed by Ansoff (1965, 1987) and the Harvard Group and Steiner (1979). This model has five stages: setting objectives, analyzing the internal environment, analyzing the external environment, evaluation, and operationalization. This basic model was criticized, according to Ofori and Atiogbe (2012), for being too rational and methodical and for being bureaucratic, with an extended hierarchy of activities that stifle success for an organization in a dynamic and changing environment. However, this

basic model, according to Ofori and Atiogbe, is considered no more than a basic building block from which strategic planning is generally developed.

7.2.2 The HAX Model

The HAX model is the second traditional model; it was developed by HAX in 1990, and is held to be a rational model which lets the activities flow sequentially as the strategy is developed (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). This model was derived from an organization's hierarchical levels which contribute to defining its strategy (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). The model, in the view of Ofori and Atiogbe, exhibits the three levels of strategy that an organization has, whatever its structure: the corporate level, business level, and functional level. The corporate level deals with determining the organization's overall mission and the linkage between the business units and the resource allocation, bearing in mind the strategic priorities. The business level deals with the needed activities that enhance and develop the organization's competitive position. The functional level includes the development of the organization's competence in such areas as finance, human resources, logistics and technology (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). Ofori and Atiogbe argue that these two traditional models, the Basic and the HAX, are considered in the literature as linear approaches to strategy because they connote the methodical, direct, and sequential action involved in planning.

7.2.3 The Dynamic Model

It is worth noting that, despite the importance of strategy implementation to organizational success: it has been neglected in the strategy literature (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). Moreover, the nature of strategy implementation and

why it succeeds or fails is not clearly understood in the above traditional strategic planning models (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). Hence, a dynamic model to strategic planning is needed, which includes a different mix of abilities and skills (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). Such an approach, as Ofori and Atiogbe argue, takes three main themes: the process perspective on strategy implementation, an emergence view, and co-aligning the organization with its environment. The first theme widens the traditional approach which focuses on organizational structure and controls by including other important elements, such as leadership, the organizational culture, learning, interpersonal and the behavioral issues producing motivation and a commitment to strategy implementation. The second theme is the emergence view, which puts together strategy formulation and its implementation. This theme views strategy formulation and implementation as an interactive and reciprocal process, involving adaptation and improvisation as well as intertwining them at a higher level. The third theme is the co-alignment of the organization with its dynamic environment as a process-indicative strategic intent which includes the purpose, coordination, goals and action of the organization. It has been argued, according to Ofori and Atiogbe, that these three themes provide a coherent basis for strategy formulation and strategy implementation. To succeed, according to the dynamic model of strategic planning, the organization has to choose from a wide list of strategic capabilities rather than depending only on a single strategic capability (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). Hence, the classical approach to strategic planning is recommended to give place to a more dynamic understanding that focuses on strategic issues such as strategic thinking, creativity, innovation, and strategic change (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012).

Moreover, in the dynamic approach, close cooperation and coordination within an organization are needed between people who have different functions and areas, to optimize the use of knowledge and to enhance the creativity needed for problem solving (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012).

7.2.4 The Holistic Model

The holistic strategic planning model is proposed by Thomas Plant (2009) and has four parts, namely:

1. Develop a strategic vision involving public and staff input.
2. Develop and prioritize the strategic and operational objectives aligned with the vision.
3. Develop departmental business plans aligned with the strategic plan.
4. Measure and report results.

Successful strategic planning approaches according to the holistic strategic planning model require all the components to be reviewed in the process as an integrated system in a comprehensive and holistic strategic planning framework based on developing a strategic vision involving internal and external audiences (Kabir 2007; Plant 2006, 2009). This involvement helps to bridge the gap between intentions and action (Drumaux and Goethals 2007), and also helps to implement strategic plans which will attain the desired initiatives, goals and objectives (Drumaux and Goethals 2007; Poister 2010). According to this model, the involvement of internal and external stakeholders in the strategic planning process will ensure ownership and high commitment towards the strategic planning process that leads to

better organizational performance (Chukayeva and Akzharov 2016; Bouhali et al. 2015; Dibrell et al 2014; Wheelen and Hunger 2010, 2012).

Additionally, and according to the holistic strategic planning model, having clear strategic and operational objectives and clear performance indicators with clear prioritized performance indicators will help top management to track success in achieving the desired strategic vision and objectives (Ayers 2010; Kroger 2007; Kunonga et al. 2010; Snyder 2016). Moreover, public sector organizations, according to the holistic model, are required to develop their departmental business plans in alignment with the strategic plan (Plant 2009), and also to link strategic planning more closely with performance management processes, to improve decision making and performance as the most important purpose of measurement and to report on their performance (Poister 2010).

It is important to note that some authors (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Plant 2009; Poister 2010) argue that both dynamic and holistic strategic planning models have more advantages than have the Basic and the HAX models, because the challenge which may affect the strategic planning process if organizations refuse to think strategically and follow the classical planning process is that they will surely not survive in the present fast changing and fluid environment.

7.3 The Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process, according to Bryson (1988), has six stages. The first is the stage of developing an initial agreement that covers the purpose of the effort, the preferred steps in the process, report forms and timing, the roles and functions of the staff, and the needed resources. The

second is to identify and clarify the formal and informal external mandates placed on the organization, such as legislation and regulations. The third is to develop the organizational mission and values and to justify to society why the organization exists. The fourth is to analyze the external environment and identify the opportunities and threats that might affect the organization. The fifth is to analyze the internal environment, and identify the areas of strength and weakness of the organization. The sixth is to identify the strategic issues for the organization. This arrangement is supported by Ofori and Atiogbe (2012), who report that the process of strategic planning includes creating a vision, mission, goals and objectives as well as analyzing the external and internal environment. Ofori and Atiogbe claim that if organizations want to succeed in modern business, while optimizing their core competencies, they also recommend having a clear vision and balanced journey for the future that takes a market-oriented approach. Ofori and Atiogbe also argue that an organization is recommended to have a clear mission to help define the scope of its operation and provide managers with a unified sense of direction for the future. Organizations, they say, should have short- or long-term goals and objectives which they seek to achieve over a defined time. Their goals and objectives, such as productivity, competitiveness, and public responsibility, should be specific, measurable, realistic, and timed (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). Moreover, the strategic planning process of an organization also includes analyzing its internal and external environments in order to clearly identify its internal strengths and weaknesses, its external opportunities and its threats in order to realize its mission and obey its mandate (Auka and Chepngeno 2016; Itani, 2014; Lenihan 2001; McNicol, 2005).

7.4 Barriers to Strategic Planning and Management

As noted above, strategic planning and management have become very important now that the environment in which public sector organizations operate has become increasingly uncertain because of changes in the population size, in stakeholders' expectations, in the political situation and agendas, in technology, and in the diversity of populations (Shahin 2011; Wasilewski and Motamedi 2007). Such an unpredictable environment forces public sector managers to cope with the external and internal barriers that confront both the formulating and the implementation of effective strategic planning (McNicol 2005; Plant 2009; Poister 2010). Janaki et al (2012) have defined a list of 34 external and internal strategic management barriers. Janaki et al. state that the barriers at the top of the list have strategic implications; they are: ineffective top management, lack of consensus between managers, and conflicts in organizational culture. Shahin (2011), too, has defined several core external and internal barriers at the stage of forming the strategic plan. The external ones are: barriers associated with the political-legal climate, with the economic climate, with the socio-cultural climate, and with the technological environment. The core internal organizational barriers, according to Shahin, are: the organizational culture, inappropriate organizational structure, weak leadership commitment, lack of financial resources, poor infrastructure of information technology, a weak performance management system, and weak strategic thinking. However, in terms of strategic planning implementation, Buluma et al (2013) claim that the main barriers to successful strategic planning implementation are the lack of control over the implementation stage, inadequate technological resources, insufficient management systems, and inadequate

management approaches. Additionally, Ifard et al (2011) defined several barriers in each phase of strategic management in public sector organizations. The barriers associated with the strategic formulation stage are: unclear vision, unclear mission, unclear objectives, low managerial commitment to strategic planning, weak skills in and knowledge of strategic planning and implementation, top-down strategic planning, and weak assessment of the internal and external environment. The barriers associated with the strategic implementation phase, according to Fard et al., were: high turnover of managers, weak supporting organizational culture for strategic planning, inappropriate organizational structure, and inappropriate resource allocation. Additionally, the barriers associated with the strategic evaluation phase as Fard et al. reported, are: inability to specify performance measurements, and lack of evaluation systems of strategic planning.

7.5 Successful factors for Strategic Planning in the Public Sector

Successful strategic planning in the public sector requires shared commitment to the organization's values, vision and mission from the relevant sets of internal and external stakeholders (Itani 2014; Lenihan 2001; McNicol 2005). Hence, public sector organizations, according to several authors (Lane and Wallis 2009; Pina et al. 2011; Prks and Hilyert 2016), need to ensure that their strategic planning practices embody developed, clear and suitable values, with a mission and vision that create the needed ownership of the organization among all the interested parties. Hendrick (2003) claims that strategic capacity is higher in governments with more comprehensive planning, more extensive monitoring, clearer measurable objectives and greater coordination. Hendrick also argues that governments with more comprehensive planning have a good reputation for planning and

long-term commitment to the strategic planning process. This is supported by many studies from the strategic planning literature (Drumaux and Goethals 2007; Ferlie 1992; Schall 1997). Hendrick also claims that, as in the private sector, the organizational performance of a public body will improve as soon as it acquires a more comprehensive, formal and rational planning process (Hendrick 2003). Thus, one of the important keys to successful strategic planning is communication, since it involves all stakeholders in the process (Hendrick 2003). However, Hendrick claims that it is difficult to plan if government invites too many people into the planning process from both inside and outside the organization and gives them greater control over the process of strategic planning. She also reports more frustration over the planning process for governments which involve other constituencies in its operations. This view is supported by the traditional beliefs in the literature which claim that public sector strategic planning is impossible, dangerous and a waste of time (Bunning 1992). Additionally, it is believed that involving people from inside the organization, the lower ranks of staff in particular, should be considered a waste of time which distracts them from other tasks (Elbanna 2009), while involving outside groups in the strategic planning process tends to increase their influence, stir them up and raise their expectations (Bunning 1992). This is true, according to Elbanna (2009), above all when the organization has a history of engaging in strategic planning efforts and then shelving the results unused. Hendrick (2003) adds that it is more difficult to plan in governments which have a decentralized planning process. However, it will be recalled that many articles in the literature (Camarata 2003; Ebdon et al. 2016; Mulhare 1999) have argued that involving different stakeholders in the strategic planning

process is very important. This involvement helps to bridge the gap between intentions and action (Drumaux and Goethals 2007) and to implement strategic plans to achieve the desired initiatives, goals and objectives (Plant 2006; Poister and Streib 2005).

Poister and Streib (2005) identify some successful strategic planning factors which have generated positive results. These success factors are: reporting strategic performance measures to the public, linking individual performance with strategic goals and objectives, tracking performance from time to time, evaluating the feasibility of proposed strategies, targeting new money when budgeting and involving citizens and other external stakeholders at the beginning of the strategic planning process. Moreover, Kenville (2005) argues that strategic planning requires more time and money, hence, it is not easy to predict if strategic planning produces positive effects, and there is a fair chance of the process failing, at the implementation stage in particular. Strategic planning, according to Kenville, does not merely consist of documentation to be implemented: it is an actual process that develops goals, objectives, mission and vision and involves both internal and external stakeholders, as well as shedding light on customers' views. Hence, more effort should be spent on developing a well-thought-out strategic plan, followed by proper implementation. Kenville in addition has reported many ways for governmental organizations to achieve their objectives. These ways are: having control over programs, solving major problems, enhancing internal communication, addressing the problems of functional departments, setting priorities, developing teamwork, strengthening overall management capacity, having a proper decision making process, and improving organizational performance.

After highlighting the strategic planning approaches, models, process, barriers, and successful factors, we turn next to the strategic management process and why it is important to public sector organizations.

8. The Strategic management Process

Before describing the strategic management process, it is important to highlight the meaning of management and top management responsibilities.

8.1 Management and Top management responsibilities

Peter Drucker considered management a distinct and important function which determines the success of organizations and societies, arguing that without capable management the resources of production will remain resources and never become products (Cohen 2014; Zahra 2003). Drucker also believed that capable management demands careful analysis of the organization's mission and business concept, clear objectives, and the proper allocation of resources to achieve these objectives (Cohen 2014; Zahra 2003). Drucker claimed moreover that competent management needs to decide which business activities to adopt through the careful analysis of target groups and markets and their needs, values and perceptions.

Effective management enables managers to follow a systematic decision making process which focuses on problem identification, followed by the development and checking of alternatives, selecting approaches and methods of implementation and evaluation (Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Wheelen and Hunger 2012; Zahra 2003). Managers are expected to be responsible for building their organization, properly integrating its different functions, and leading professional employees towards the fulfillment of the organization's vision and the accomplishment of its corporate objectives

(Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Wheelen and Hunger 2012; Zahra 2003). Top managers with a diversity of experience, background and skills tend to be significantly related to the overall improvement of an organization. Unless top managers support and encourage the strategic planning process, effective strategic management is not likely to be achieved (Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Poister 2010; Wheelen and Hunger 2012).

According to the literature, and as mentioned before, the strategic management process is divided into three main stages, namely, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation (Cox et al. 2012; Rhys et al. 2012; Subba, 2010). The three stages of the strategic management process are discussed below in turn.

8.2 Strategic Formulation

The strategic plan formulation phase aims to determine the future direction of an organization by identifying its strategic and operational goals and objectives (Cohen 2013; Daigneault 2016; Dougherty 2016; Fard et al. 2011). This requires an analysis of the internal environment, including the strength and weakness factors, and the external environment, which includes opportunities and threat factors (Bryson and Alston 2005; Fard et al. 2011; Fred 2011). The aim of the internal analysis is to produce a documented picture of the most significant internal environmental development that influences the organization when it formulates its goals, objectives, structures and systems. Meanwhile, the analysis and assessment of the external environment help the organization to accomplish its mission and fulfill its mandate towards people, properties, processes and products (Dougherty 2016; Ofori and Atiogbe 2012).

The formulation phase also includes identifying the values, vision, mission and formulation of the performance measures for evaluating how far the organization has implemented the desired goals and objectives (Brenes et al 2008; Bryson and Alston 2005; Cohen 2013; Combs et al 2005). However, Rhys (2012) argued that not all public sector organizations are guaranteed to have a clear strategy formulation process. Moreover, it is important to reflect that little trouble is generally taken to ensure the participation of lower ranking employees at the level of overall strategic planning, least of all at the development stage (Cohen 2013; Hatipoglu et al. 2014; Tonnessen and Gjefsen 1999). This omission lowers the employees' understanding of business and does little to ensure their commitment, ownership or willingness to attain the organization's goals and objectives, thus, not improving the working environment and not securing good practical implementation (Bryson and Alston 2005; Tonnessen and Gjefsen 1999). It should be recalled that, in recent years, countries are beginning to value the service-based economy, where services are considered central to creating value (Leskaj et al. 2013). Frontline employees play a critical role in the success of private or public service organizations, for they link the external stakeholders with the operations inside the organization. Thus, to ensure the employees' firm engagement, research recommends increasing the level of frontline staff involvement in strategic planning (Bryson and Alston 2005; Ebdon et al. 2016; Leskaj et al. 2013). On this basis and according to the literature, employees need to be trained in various issues concerning the implementation of strategic plans, and should expect to be allowed to fully participate from the beginning of the formulation of strategy to the evaluation of the strategic planning (Buluma et al. 2013). This will help to ensure that all

the employees will be involved in making decisions in regard to both the formulation and the implementing of strategic plans (Buluma et al. 2013). Moreover, involving external stakeholders in the formulation process will ensure their collaboration and support, although it risks giving them more power and influence (Elbanna 2010; Poister 2010).

8.3 Strategic Implementation

Although strategic plan implementation was not often mentioned in the literature, it has recently been given attention (Buluma et al.2013; Chen et al. 2015; Kristamuljana 2011; Crittendenand Crittenden 2008). The strategy literature concentrates on analyzing strategic practices and there has been more emphasis lately on issues of implementation (Harrington and Ottenbacher 2011; Subba 2010). Hence, because of the substantial impact of implementation on strategic initiatives, the topic of strategic implementation has been the focus of several studies in the literature (Bianchi and Salvatore 2015; Harrington and Ottenbacher 2011). Strategy implementation is the method of executing or operationalising an organization's strategic plans (Kaplan 2001; Mintzberg 2003; Mintzberg 2007; Mintzberg et al 1998). Strategic implementation is defined by Abdalkrim (2013: 136) as:

“The process of transforming intentions into action”.

The strategic plan implementation phase involves designing an appropriate organizational structure, ensuring that the right divisional and functional managers are supported by the right backgrounds and skills (Dibrell et al 2014; Fard et al. 2011; Marin 2012; Subba 2010). According to Ofori and Atiogbe (2012), well-conceived strategic plans help organizations to enhance their decision-making process and manage change. But this

requires well-defined achievable goals, the full integration of a number of sequential activities, and above of all commitment to the strategic planning implementation (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). To ensure a proper strategy implementation process, organizations need to analyze their organizational structure, organizational culture, power and conflicts (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Stockwell and Casey 2016; Wronka and Wronka 2016). Moreover, successful implementation, according to the literature, requires managers to have the right policies, allocate the needed resources, control implementation, and receive up-to-date information that facilitates learning (Cohen 2013; Marin 2012; Mintzberg 2007; Mintzberg et al 1998).

Mapetere et al (2012) claim that although strategy formulation is fairly easy, the implementation of strategy throughout an organization is more difficult. Although organizations may have formulated the best strategic plans, they may fail to achieve the desired outcomes because of improper strategy implementation (Buluma et al. 2013; Rhys et al. 2012). Poor strategy implementation has in the literature been blamed for a number of strategic problems and failures (Rhys et al. 2012; Wheelen and Hunger2010). Important factors contributing to these problems and failures are, for example, weak support from top and middle management, improper linkage between the strategic plans and the decision-making process, and inadequate internal and external communication. According to Ofori and Atiogbe (2012), in order to maintain a competitive position in the market and to enhance business performance, public sector organizations are recommendednot to concentrate on strategy formulation only, but also to highly value and ensure a proper strategy implementation process. Public sector organizations, according to the literature,need to focus on ways of

improving their ability and the methods that they expect to adopt to successfully implement new initiatives, services, and strategies at both business unit and corporate level (Cohen 2013; Harrington and Ottenbacher 2011). To achieve the targeted strategic objectives, the entire organization needs to be involved (Buluma et al. 2013; Poister et al 2013). Therefore, for the successful implementation of strategies, both lower level managers and non-management employees should expect to be adequately informed of the facts and issues regarding the implementation of strategies. Otherwise, a lack of consensus on the information passes through several management levels and this creates barriers to the successful implementing of the strategic plan (Buluma et al. 2013; Stockwell and Casey 2016). Moreover, effective communication is considered among the most frequently mentioned items that are responsible for the successful implementation of a strategy management; therefore management should properly explain the duties, tasks and new responsibilities to devolve on employees (Buluma et al. 2013; Cohen 2013). Communication and understanding shared among all employees is a crucial aspect of the strategy implementation process: hence, top management needs to ensure that all the information concerning strategic plans is at the disposal of all the employees (Al Nawakda 2012; Buluma et al. 2013). Additionally, and according to the literature (Analoui 2012; Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Sudirman 2012; Turkeli and Ercek 2010), to effectively implement strategic plans, top management need to play a major role not only in the formulation stage, but also in the implementation stage of the strategic planning process. Top management need to effectively integrate the several activities of different departments within the organization to help carry out the organizational mission through

the best integration of processes, structures, resources and people (Alamri 2016; Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Parks and Hilyert 2016). For an implementation process to be effective, moreover, leaders are required to set a good example and be viewed as role models of strong and inspiring leadership (Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Kadir and Jusoff 2009). Additionally, incentives and a proper reward system will motivate employees to implement strategic planning (Kadir and Jusoff 2009). It is worth noting that effective leadership is considered one of the important ways of ensuring successful strategy implementation (Mapetere et al. 2012). Weak leadership involvement in strategy implementation will impair the success of the strategic planning (Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Mapetere et al. 2012). Many studies, according to Mapetere et al (2012), reveal that most strategic planning has failed because of the inability of leaders to make use of their various skills and their failure to be a role model in providing the needed energy, loyalty, commitment and support, mostly at the implementation stage. In bureaucratic governmental organizations, strategy implementation is combined with change and transformation (Alpha et al. 2012), which creates difficulties and barriers to their managers (Alpha et al. 2012). Hence, managers' commitment to organizational objectives will be the strongest driver for their organizations to achieve their objectives (Alpha et al. 2012; Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016). Mapetere et al (2012), claim that leaders should possess such skills as the competence to craft a vision and set goals and the know-how to use power and apply their technical, interpersonal, problem-solving, leadership, human and conceptual skills. Marin (2012) also reveals that middle managers are spending most of their time and effort on short-term activities, and leaving the long-term ones to top management,

who prefer a centralized approach to strategic planning. According to the literature, the *top-down* leadership approach and the lack of a close relationship between the formulation and implementation groups are considered among the top barriers to strategy implementation (Janaki et al. 2012). According to the literature, it is also more difficult to implement strategic planning with a bureaucratic *top-down* command and control approach, because in this situation the people in the lower ranks of an organization will not properly participate in achieving the planned goals and objectives (Hendrick 2003; Plant 2006,2009). Moreover, weak middle management commitment to the implementation of the strategic plan, as well as weak internal communication and collaboration between most organizational departments will not encourage lower ranking staff to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities in achieving operational objectives, because they have no ownership or commitment towards the strategic planning process (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). Some studies, according to Marin (2012), argue that the involvement of middle managers in the strategic management process would improve organizational performance, because they play a crucial central role in strategic management implementation and can inform top management about operational performance. Hence, they prepare an organization for the future, maximize the use of its resources, help in strategic decision making, identify suppliers and customers' problems, perform strategic activities, and adapt to change within its environment (Marin 2012; Williams and Lewis 2008; York and Miree 2012). Top management in public sector organizations seems to adopt a *laissez-faire* attitude towards employees, provide weak support, and frustrate the last stages of the implementation of planned strategy (Rkeli and Ek 2010).

Moreover, this top management is more concerned with political considerations than with organizational change; thus the strategic management implementation is likely to fail (Rkeli and Ek 2010).

Some writers, according to Oforio and Atiogbe (2012), encourage top management to appreciate the practices of strategic management, which is considered a sequence of analytical and evaluative procedures that formulate and implement a strategy to enable organizations to match their capabilities and competencies to the competitive conditions in the external environment. Thus, enhancing organizational performance by integrating and optimizing management processes requires the development of a well-conceived strategic plan.

The strategic management literature (Aldehayyat and Al Khattab 2013; Ferreira and Proença 2015) reports that there is a positive relationship between strategic planning and organizational effectiveness. However, the relationship between strategic planning and organizational effectiveness is influenced by the level of participants' satisfaction with the planning and implementation process (Ammons 2015; Bryson 2011; Yongjin 2013). Moreover, Doherty (2010) argues that leaders of organizations are recommended to have the skills and abilities to address the internal factors and external factors that influence the organization. Doherty stresses that analysis of the internal strengths and weaknesses and also analysis of the external opportunities and threats should be the priority of organizational leaders in the strategy formulation process by matching the internal environment of an organization with its external environment. Kenville (2005) also claims that an effective and systematic strategic management approach requires public managers to have a clear sense of vision, mission, values

and overall strategy. Top management are recommended to become more involved in the strategic management process (Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016; Barzelay and Campbell 2003), since this will improve the relationships between the elected officials and the administrative staff (Ebdon et al. 2016; Kenville 2005).

8.4 Strategic Evaluation

Strategic evaluation is the third and final stage of the strategic management process after strategy formulation and strategy implementation (David 2011; Subba 2010). At this stage, management evaluates the strategy, the progress and the performance of the organization in order to consolidate the lessons learned from its experience (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Subba 2010). Strategy evaluation is at the top of governments' agendas as a way of ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of government organizations (Bianchi and Salvatore 2015; Poister 2010). It is important to evaluate strategy to ensure that resources have been allocated and used in a proper manner, and also to effectively communicate the status of initiatives and programs so as to resolve issues before they reach crisis level (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Plant 2009; Poister et al 2013). It is important to note that public organizations with high quality strategic management components such as strategy communication and clarification, and the involvement and empowerment of employees, are likely to have more advanced evaluation strategy with proper performance management systems (Ammons 2015; Barzelay and Campbell 2003; McAdam et al. 2011).

Performance management is considered as one of the important elements in public sector strategic management (Rhys et al. 2012; Parks and Hilyert 2016). Performance management is defined by Poister (2010:251) as:

“The process of setting [goals] for an organization and managing effectively to achieve those goals and eventually bring about the desired outcomes”.

The performance management system is an ongoing organizational design for strategically managing the implementation of agreed strategies, examining the performance of these strategies and then formulating revised or new strategies (Lynch 2012, 2015; Malekpour et al. 2015). It should also be noted that because performance management systems play an important role in linking vision, mission, goals and objectives to create public value at reasonable cost (Rhys et al. 2012), the development of performance management systems is a significant component of successful strategic formulation and its implementation (Barzelay and Campbell 2003; Bianchi and Salvatore 2015).

Additionally, according to Plant (2009), performance management can be considered a management tool for organizations to manage and control their resources and outcomes. Plant argued that performance management is expected to be adequately linked to the strategic plan, and should track inputs, outcomes and efficiencies. He went on to say that performance management needs to establish a benchmarking strategy that sets targets and market performance comparisons. He commented that performance management is expected to include a programme evaluation system that ensures effectiveness through measuring performance and outcomes.

Gantick et al (2002) contended that many public sector leaders struggle to strike the required balance between the available resources and the increasing demands for high quality services. Gantick et al. added that governmental leaders face great challenges in managing the trade-off between a community's quality of life and its growth, and in learning how to integrate services to address the diverse needs of citizens and other stakeholders. Thus, according to Gantick et al., in order to improve organizational performance, government leaders are expected to design a proper performance management system which ensures that governmental organizations are committed to improving the value of the services delivered, to know what the customers' performance requirements are, to frequently measure and evaluate progress in performance, and finally to ensure the leaders' commitment to the goals, direction, and values of the organization.

In addition, Poister (2010) claimed that inefficient performance management would create difficulties when governmental organizations wanted to make the kind of decisions that would advance substantial performance improvement. Thus, Poister warned that governmental organizations which needed to improve their performance were expected to create an adequate performance management system. He added that such a system would help these organizations to actively analyze poor performance; to redirect internal budget allocations so that they made programmes more effective; to provide the needed training to service delivery staff to overcome performance deficiencies; and to work collaboratively with partners, contractors and suppliers to solve performance problems.

However, Plant (2009) noted that implementing performance management in public sector organizations is often difficult because governmental organizations usually have multiple goals and services targeting different client groups which have a variety of needs and expectations. This generates conflicts about values and priorities, especially in a very rapidly changing environment. Such an environment, he believed, is unique to governmental organizations: it makes performance management challenging and requires an approach that can adapt to these complexities. Poister (2010) also argued that governmental organizations, especially large and complex ones, typically maintain a wide variety of performance management systems at different organization levels to serve different purposes, focusing on different programmes and different audiences. Thus, Poister claimed that, to be effective, public organizations are expected to secure performance management systems with ongoing processes at all organizational levels and across numerous applications.

9. Strategic Management – Concluding Remarks

For the last three decades, there has been sustained interest in strategic management in the public sector from both academics and professionals (Fred 2011; Leskaj et al. 2013; Mryan 2012). There are several benefits from engagement in strategic management, such as having a clear future vision, long-term interaction with the environment, the achievement of satisfactory financial and economic outcomes, and the effective allocation of capabilities and resources (Fred 2011; Leskaj et al. 2013; Mryan 2012). Poister (2010) argues that many governmental organizations have worked hard on strategic planning in order to produce positive results and outcomes, but it is not clear how worthwhile these efforts have been. Poister maintains that there has

been continued lively debate in the literature on the way to go about strategic planning in the public sector in terms of scope, content, approach, involvement and participation. Poister also argues that the efforts of many governmental organizations to engage in strategic planning are not meaningful, because these organizations fail to identify and develop the strategies which help to achieve the desired results; they also fail to put strategic plans into action and link them to methods of implementation. Poister also argues that, in order to engage more effectively in strategic planning, these organizations need to transform their traditional strategic planning process to a strategic management process. This argument is also supported by the literature (Chaola et al. 2015; Hacker et al. 2001). The organizational transitioning from traditional strategic planning process to the process of strategic management, according to Poister, will produce more meaningful strategy in the future; it will allow the implementing strategies to be more effective, through managing the overall strategic agenda on a steady and not sporadic basis. This transition will also help to achieve long-term growth, profitability and sustainable competitive advantage (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Poister 2010; Poister et al 2013). Moreover, strategic management ensures that organizations have proper organizational structure (Rhys et al. 2012; Daigneault 2016; Haycock et al. 2012), appropriate processes and the culture needed for the desired change, and achieve high returns (Abadžić et al. 2012; Berry and Wechsler 1995; Bianchi and Salvatore 2015).

10. Chapter Summary

Strategic planning, under this name, started in the private sector in the early 1960s with descriptive analyses of strategies and the formulation of strategies and their environment. Strategic planning was introduced in the public sector with a sharper focus on local government organizations. Several authors argue that strategic planning is applicable in the public sector in the same way as in the private sector, while other studies argue that the significant differences between the public and private sectors should be studied. In contrast, public sector organizations have and serve more diverse stakeholders: hence, it is difficult to identify and develop strategic issues which resemble those of organizations in the private sector.

Over more than three decades, there has been a sustained interest in strategic planning in the public sector from both academics and professionals because strategic planning can be seen in the public sector in the form of noteworthy management innovations with the benefits of a highly structured, future-oriented management technique imported from the best practices of the private sector. It is clear in the literature that applying strategic planning processes will secure positive outcomes and long-term growth, while sustaining competitive advantage and profitability, improving efficiency and effectiveness and leading to the kind of good government that citizens want and deserve. However, the value of strategic planning and its use by the public sector in particular has been questioned by several authors. Other critical authors argue that in the rapidly changing and competing environment, the strategic planning process is limited, too costly, time consuming and not necessarily capable of producing strategies that create the needed outcomes.

The challenges according to the literature which may affect the strategic planning process if organizations refuse to think strategically and follow the classical planning process is that they will surely not survive in today's fast changing and fluid environment. Strategy development is viewed as a formal and linear approach based on top-down decision-making processes that involve mostly top and middle management while excluding lower management and other stakeholders. Such non-involvement is based on the idea that lower level staff members are incapable and poorly trained. The non-involvement approach might, however, fail to ensure the commitment and ownership of the strategic planning process on the part of the latter. Other challenges were the unwillingness by top management to appreciate or listen to staff comments or suggestions, lack of appreciation of the work done, lack of staff motivation, lack of a well-defined appraisal system and poor operational management. The critical factors according to the literature that influence the implementation of strategic planning in public sector organizations are political influence, and unclear vision, mission, and goals, non-continuous environmental analysis, lack of managerial commitment, the top-down strategic planning approach, lower levels of strategic planning knowledge and skills among employees, weak support from the organizational culture, top managers' turnover rates, inappropriate organizational structure, inappropriate allocation of resources, missing or weak performance measures, and finally the lack of a strategic planning evaluation system.

To meet future demands and to adapt effectively to the rapidly changing environment, several authors have argued that public sector organizations are recommended to import and transfer modern strategic management

concepts from the private sector, such as strategic thinking and innovation. Public sector organizations, according to the literature, are required in the future to play a more critical role than at present. If public sector organizations want success in the coming decade, according to the literature, they are recommended to anticipate new challenges and problems, to respond to them effectively, to think strategically and to manage for results. The next decade, according to the literature, requires public sector organizations to review all the components in the strategic management process as an integrated system based on developing a strategic vision involving the internal and external audience; next, to prioritize strategic goals and initiatives and align them with the organizational vision, then to align the business plan with the strategic plan and finally to measure and to report the achieved results. Moreover, in order to ensure successful strategic planning implementation, the strategic plan is expected to be part of a strategic management system that ensures the design of a solid organizational structure, having clear communication mechanisms, adequate technology and is equipped with a competent reward system.

Generally speaking, in today's increasingly challenging environment, strategic management is considered the most critical and fundamental process by which public sector organizations may achieve their desired outcomes. However, very few governmental organizations have developed a fully-fledged strategic management process that seriously integrates all the management processes and major functions for advancing the strategic agenda. Strategic management, according to the literature, requires skilled and powerful leadership to ensure a proper fit between the organization and its environment, to involve different stakeholders in creating the vision, to

ensure internal and external commitment to the vision, mission, and strategic objectives, to encourage effective internal and external communication, to ensure proper decision-making processes, to properly allocate resources, to assign implementation responsibilities for strategic initiatives, to identify valid performance measures and to ensure proper links between the organizational structure and its strategy. Hence, moving from traditional strategic planning to effective strategic management, according to the literature, needs an intensive, collective, and continuous involvement of top management. If public sector organizations want a more meaningful strategy in the future, they have to effectively plan, implement, and evaluate their strategic management process; thus, public sector organizations will be more citizen-focused, decentralized, collaborative and results-oriented.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

1. Introduction

It will be recalled that the main objective of the present research is to investigate strategic management practices in public sector organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. More specifically, this research explores the strategic formulation, implementation, and evaluation process in governmental organizations in Bahrain, and then explores the elements that are related to a successful strategic management approach in these organizations. It should also be remembered that this research seeks to answer the following questions:

Question 1: *How were strategic planning processes developed, implemented and evaluated in the public sector organizations of the Kingdom of Bahrain?*

Question 2: *To what extent were public sector organizations broadening their strategic planning efforts into a strategic management approach?*

Question 3: *What are the practical implications for the policy makers and practitioners of strategic planning in the Kingdom of Bahrain?*

In this chapter, the nature of business and management research will be discussed. Moreover, the present chapter addresses the research design and methodology, the research methods and the target population. This chapter also addresses the research instrumentation for the quantitative approach. Additionally, it explains the measures taken for the ethical

protection of the research participants. At the end of this chapter, the design and methods adopted in the present research are summarized. Figure 2 reflects the research process, as follows.

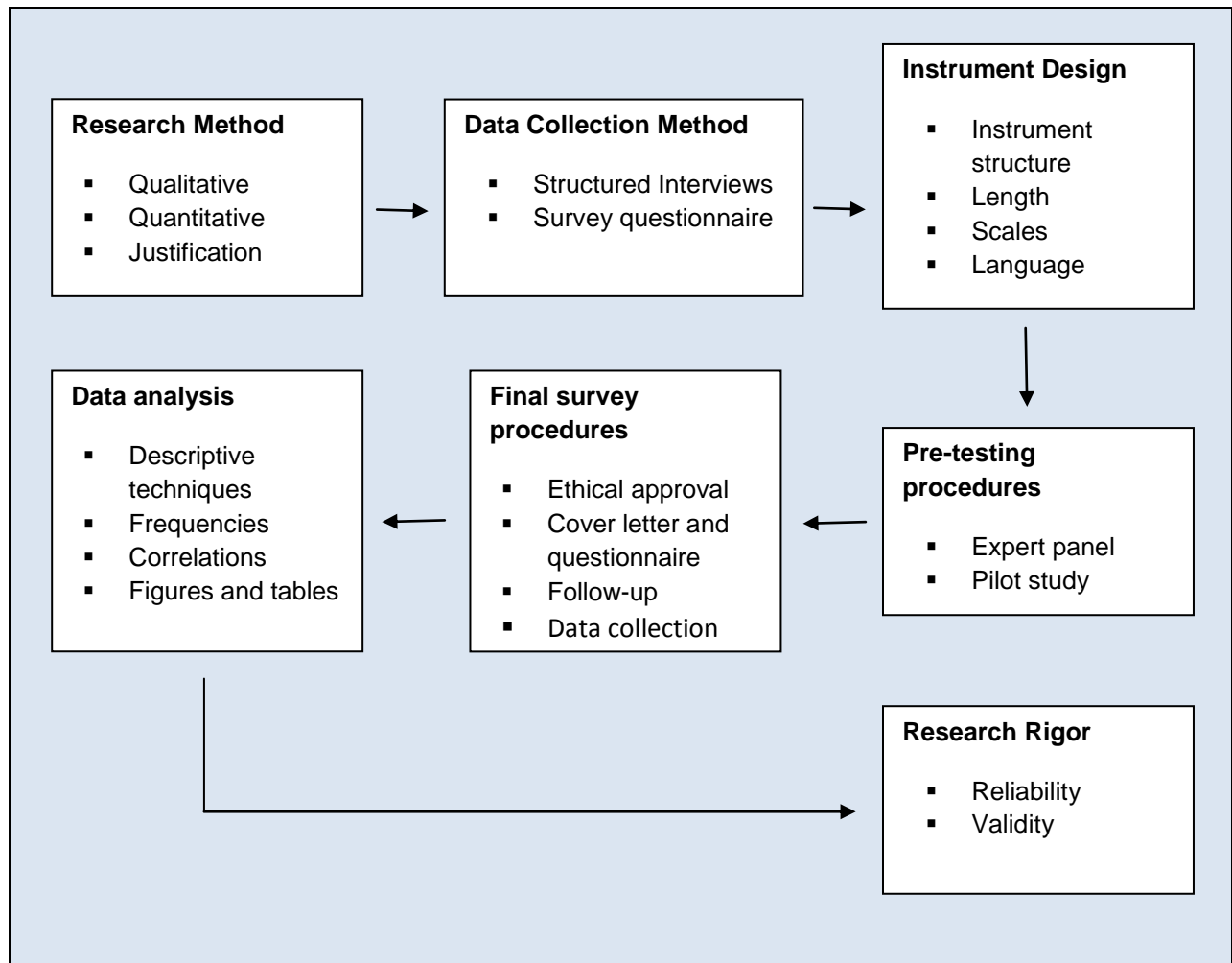


Figure (2): The Research Process

2. The Nature of Business and Management Research

Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad (2010) claimed that research simply means a search of facts by means of a purposive investigation in order to answer questions and solve problems. Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad (2010: 2) defined research as:

“A systematic and logical study of an issue or problem or phenomenon through scientific method”.

Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad argued that several research definitions in the literature reveal various other characteristics of research, such as:

1. Research is a systematic and logical investigation into a phenomenon.
2. Research is a purposive investigation that aims to describe, interpret and explain a phenomenon.
3. Research uses scientific methods.
4. Research applies feasible tests to validate tools and findings in an objective and logical manner.
5. Research is based on observable experience or empirical evidence.
6. Research aims to answer research questions and solve problems.
7. Research emphasizes the development of theory and generalization.
8. Research aims to produce meaningful findings, and test them.

Saunders et al (2009: 5) additionally define research as:

“Something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge”.

According to this definition, research is based on logical relationships and not mere beliefs. The above writers also argue that research involves an explanation of the data collection methods, obtains meaningful findings and assesses any limitations of these findings. Moreover, Saunders et al. assert that the research should include identifying the research purpose, and the setting of clear research objectives and research questions.

Saunders et al. argue that research is more than simply reading a few books or articles, talking to other people or asking them particular questions in order to collect data. Research, in their view, has a number of characteristics such as a clear purpose, and a systematic way of collecting and interpreting data.

On the basis of their research definition, above, Saunders et al (2009: 5) define business and management research as:

“Undertaking systematic research to find out things about business and management”.

Saunders et al. reported four things that make business and management a distinctive focus for research. First, the way in which researchers draw their conclusions based on knowledge developed by other disciplines. Second, the fact those powerful and busy managers will not allow research access unless they can see personal or commercial benefits. Third, the tendency nowadays of organizational managers, as well as those conducting the research, to be educated. Fourth, the need for this type of research to have some practical consequences.

Saunders et al. claimed that adopting knowledge from other disciplines allows business and management research to reach new insights which are hard to gain through these disciplines separately. Saunders et al. added that business and management research needs to address business issues and practical managerial problems, not only to provide findings that advance knowledge and understanding. Additionally, despite the varied purposes of different business and management studies, Saunders et al. argue that all business and management research is undertaken purely to understand

business and management processes and their outcomes by engaging both theory and practice.

3. Research Design

The research design focuses on turning the research objectives and questions into a research project (Saunders et al. 2009). A research design as defined by Saunders et al (2009: 136) is:

“The general plan of how you will go about answering your research questions”.

According to Yin (2008), the research design is considered a logical sequence that connects the empirical data to both the questions and the conclusions of a particular research study. Ramos (2011) added that a research design is a plan for completing a piece of research through multiple steps which include developing the research questions, then collecting and analyzing data to reach the research findings and conclusions. Ramos added that the research design is a plan for guiding researchers during the process of data collection and analysis and the interpretation of the results and findings. Additionally, Yin (2008) claimed that the main objective of the research design is to prevent and avoid a situation in which the research evidence does not address the initial research questions. He added that researchers should investigate and collect their data from more than one organization in order to draw accurate conclusions about the investigated topic.

Saunders et al (2009) also argued that the research design should have clear objectives driven by the research questions. Moreover, Saunders et al. reported that the researcher has to be clear in his research design about the

source of data collection, ethical considerations, and such data access constraints as location, money and time. Additionally, in the research design, Saunders et al. added that the researcher should justify his research design decisions based on his research philosophy, and his research objectives and questions.

The present research design is covered as follows.

3.1 Research Purpose

There are four different approaches to research, depending on its purpose (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). The first is *Explanatory (analytical) research*, aiming to understand phenomena by discovering and measuring the causal relations between them. This approach is useful if the researcher is aiming to test cause-and-effect relationships between variables. The second, *Exploratory research*, is used when there are no or few studies to refer to and when the research looks for ideas, patterns or hypotheses but does not test or confirm any hypothesis. Such exploratory research would help to find out what is happening in a given area, and would help in asking questions, seeking new insights and shedding new light on phenomena. The third, *Descriptive research*, describes phenomena as they exist and collects data which are likely to be quantitative. Although a descriptive approach cannot establish causal relationships between variables, it is used to identify and obtain information on the characteristics of a particular issue. Finally, *Predictive research* aims to forecast the likelihood of a similar situation occurring elsewhere. This kind also aims to generalize the analytical findings by predicting certain phenomena on the basis of hypothesized and general relationships.

The research questions of the present research should make it clear which research method is the most suitable approach to take in answering them. Descriptive research was the kind chosen by the researcher to answer the above research questions, and to provide information about the behavior, attitudes, and other characteristics of governmental employees in the public sector of Bahrain (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). The descriptive design is appropriate to the present research because it concerns *What* and *How* questions, and allows relationships to be demonstrated and the world to be described as it exists, in an example of cross-sectional research (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). Moreover, the descriptive design is appropriate for the present research because it employs a survey questionnaire which measures central tendencies, variation, and correlations, as described below (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009).

3.2 Research strategy

Saunders et al (2009) lists many ways to collect empirical data, such as experiments, surveys, case studies, action research, grounded theory, and ethnographic and archival research. According to Saunders et al., experimental strategy is closely connected to the natural sciences, where causal links between an independent variable and another, dependent, variable tend to be investigated. Surveys are a strategy which, according to Saunders et al., is more often used in exploratory and descriptive research, while case studies involve an empirical investigation using multiple sources of evidence. Action research focuses on action, such as promoting organizational change, while grounded theory, as Saunders et al. have reported, aims to predict and explain behaviors in order to develop and build

theory. Ethnographic strategy involves describing and explaining the social world in the way in which the members of a given society would describe and explain it. Archival strategy tends to use recent and historical administrative records and documents as the principal source of data. The choice of which strategy to use, according to Saunders et al., depends on the types of research question, the control that an investigator has over actual events and whether the research focuses on contemporary or historical phenomena.

It should be noted that the present research questions suggest that surveys, archival analysis and case studies would be the most appropriate strategies in this study. It should also be noted that the survey strategy would be more appropriate in the present research than other research strategies, for several reasons. First, as mentioned before, the research questions in this research tend to be *How* and *What* questions. These, as well as *Who*, *Where*, *How many*, and *How much* questions, are frequent in the survey strategies of business and management research. Second, the present research is descriptive in nature and thus of a kind that tends to use a survey strategy. Third, a survey strategy would help the researcher to collect a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way, using an administrative questionnaire, which allows the easy comparison of standardized data. Fourth, the survey strategy allows the researcher to collect quantitative data which can be analyzed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics. Finally, and most importantly, the data collection in the survey strategy will help the present researcher to examine the relationships between the variables and to produce a model of these

relationships (Brandimarte 2011; Bryman 2006; Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009).

3.3 Research Method and Methodology

The research method and the research methodology should be kept distinct (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). The term *method* means a tool for collecting or analyzing data, whereas *methodology* refers to the overall research approach to data collection and data analysis (Brandimarte 2011; Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). Research methodology is definable as the precise action of following a path to answer the research questions (Hart et al. 1980). Research methodology is determined by such factors as the research objectives, research questions and technique of the data analysis in use (Adams 2011; Brandimarte 2011; Bryman 2006; Bryman and Bell 2007; Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad 2010; Martin and Bridgmon 2012; Saunders et al. 2009). The research methodology provides rules for reasoning, communication and inter-subjectivity (Bryman and Bell 2007; Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad 2010; Martin and Bridgmon 2012; Samour 2010). There is no best research methodology to resolve a certain problem: any methodology should find a middle ground between two alternatives (Bryman and Bell 2007; Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad 2010; Martin and Bridgmon 2012; Saunders et al. 2009; Samour 2010). Bryman and Bell (2007) argue that research is either quantitative or qualitative in nature. Quantitative research was considered the dominant methodology of the twentieth century. In it, the researchers pose hypotheses or theories and then test them by different research methods to establish cause and effect relationships and then generalize them to a larger sample population. Several studies according to Schwarz (2003) report that quantitative

research is proper for organizational studies: it consists in controlling variables based on the assumption of a regular universe, although human behaviour is notoriously irregular. Qualitative research, however, tries to understand the world as it is, seeks explanation through individual consciousness, emphasizes the participants' perspective, is concerned with process over outcomes and describes phenomena verbally in preference to numbers (Bryman and Bell 2007; Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad 2010; Martin and Bridgmon 2012).

Adams (2011) finds that, in the last few decades, debates and interest have increased regarding the pros and cons of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Adams adds that some authors have wondered which method is superior in studying a particular research topic. Brown (2011) reports that the quantitative is the older method more widely recognized and with more respected methodology, as well as having greater accuracy, being easy to verify through its statistical findings. The quantitative approach according to Brown was developed to explore the natural sciences such as biology or chemistry. But, in Brown's view, qualitative methods are more suitable for the social sciences, which are more emotional in character. The quantitative approach alone does not capture the fabric of intricately interacting social norms, or organizations or governmental regulations and does not produce deep comprehension of the investigated phenomena (Bryman and Bell 2007; Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad 2010). Yet the qualitative approach is ineffective in not allowing researchers to calculate, examine measurements or replicate (Ramos 2011). However, a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods, according to Brown (2011), acts to

enrich the statistical findings by bringing in the qualitative approach and to giving the qualitative findings a firmer statistical basis.

With this in mind, the Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed methods will be discussed as mixed research approaches below, to explain and justify the appropriateness of the research methods adopted to collect data in the present research.

3.3.1 Quantitative Research

Bryman and Bell (2007) remark that quantitative research is normally used to test a theory or a general statement that may be proposed concerning a relationship between variables. Borrego (2009) adds that the purpose of quantitative research is to project the research findings onto a larger population through an objective process. He goes on to say that quantitative methods are most suitable for deductive approaches where a theory or hypothesis is being tested and the phrasing of the research questions govern the data collection. They yield data that are collected from surveys administered to a sample population to enable researchers to generalize or make inferences and then to derive conclusions from these data and measures of statistical analysis. Folkers (2008) amplifies the above by saying that quantitative research collects information from one or group of participants in order to have more data about their characteristics, attitudes, opinions, as well as their past experiences. Folkers contends that among the many advantages of quantitative research, the greatest is that participants are assured of being anonymous in their status and their responses, thus adding more credibility to the research results and conclusions. Folkers claims that quantitative methodology is not like qualitative because it requires a more analytical approach to the data and thus allows researchers

to objectively measure objects and facts, independent of context. Moreover, Folkers asserts that quantitative methodology enhances the research by adding a degree of precision that tends to increase credibility when presented to potential clients. Quantitative research is chosen when the research intends using empirical statements, to describe what the case is in practice, instead of what it ought to be (Brandimarte 2011; Martin and Bridgmon 2012). Additionally, adopting quantitative methods will help to explain phenomena if researchers collect numerical data and then analyze them using mathematically based methods (Bryman 2006; Bryman and Bell 2007; Shahin 2011).

Among the strengths of quantitative research, already constructed theories about the way in which phenomena occur can be tested and validated. The researcher also can test constructed hypotheses before collecting data (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). Moreover, with the quantitative approach, data analysis is quicker (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). Quantitative methods have the advantages of independence from the researcher, researcher trustworthiness, increased reliability and validity, the ability to uncover patterns, instrument standardization, hypothesis testing, causal explanation and generalizability (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). However, Brown (2011) notes that the weaknesses of the quantitative approach are that the research theories and categories used may not reflect the local constituencies' understandings; the researcher may focus on theory testing rather than theory generation, thus missing the accompanying phenomena; and the knowledge thus generated may be too general to be applied to specific local individuals, contexts and institutions.

3.3.2 Qualitative Research

Bryman and Bell (2007) remark that qualitative research approaches the phenomena to be investigated in a softer and more personal way. Qualitative methods are used by researchers to identify the perspectives and knowledge generated through the life experience of participants (Kenville 2005). Qualitative research aims to analyze the multiple meanings of individual social and historical experiences in order to define a pattern or define a theory (Martin 2011). Qualitative research is adopted so as to study a different professional environment (Martin 2011). Making epistemological assumptions is inevitable: they allow a relationship to be made between researchers and participants, who can both produce knowledge regarding the researched topic (Martin 2011). The main objectives of qualitative research are to discover rather than verify processes or theory, to seek depth rather than breadth, to focus on small rather than big samples and to learn how and why people think and behave in certain situations (Adams 2011; Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). Qualitative research is considered an approach but not a set of techniques and its usefulness is based on the nature of the social phenomena under investigation (Bryman and Bell 2007; Martin 2011); it creates better understanding of the phenomena or experience than quantitative research does (Martin 2011; Saunders et al. 2009). Qualitative research is characterized by the collection and analysis of textual data using surveys, interviews, focus groups, ethnographies, observation and conversational analysis (Borrego 2009; Bryman and Bell 2007). This adds to our understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations for people's attitudes, preferences or behaviours (Bryman and Bell 2007). Qualitative research asks question of this kind:

'What is occurring? Why does something occur? And how does one phenomenon affect another? (Borrego 2009; Bryman and Bell 2007). Blackmon (2008) claims that many studies report several advantages of qualitative studies, such as the researcher's ability to uncover patterns, trustworthiness and independence: the standardization of instruments, hypothesis testing, causal explanation, objectivity, generalizability, high reliability and validity, sound statistical validity and duplicability. Moreover, Brown (2011) reports that part of the strengths of the qualitative approach is that it helps the researcher to deeply study a limited number of cases and to describe complex phenomena, and the researcher can collect data in naturalistic settings. But the weakness of the qualitative approach, according to Brown, is that the qualitative researcher will find it difficult to make quantitative predictions and to test theory: the analysis of data is more time consuming: and the research findings are more influenced by the researcher's personal biases. However, Bryman and Bell (2007) remind us that some strategic management researchers have suggested that adopting the qualitative approach provides an important complement to the explanations made possible by the statistical quantitative approach that are likely to be used within the literature of strategic management.

3.3.3 Mixed methods research

During the last 20 years and more, mixed methods research has been adopted as an alternative to either the quantitative or the qualitative method used alone, in order to provide both emotional and statistical benefits to research projects, and to provide greater flexibility and detail (Brown 2011). Combining the quantitative and qualitative approaches tends to serve as an effective research methodology, because mixing the quantitative and

qualitative approaches maximizes the strengths of both methodologies (Adams 2011; Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009). Moreover, business research deals with the social sciences and emotions, making qualitative methods applicable (Bryman and Bell 2007). In the meantime, business research is also statistical and has some quantitative facets (Brown 2011). Hence, combining the two accommodates both emotions and statistics and thus is the best choice for business research design (Saunders et al. 2009). Mixed methods research can use one of the following major designs.

- 1. Triangulation Designs:** Triangulation occurs when the researcher collects data from two sources concurrently in the same phase and interpretation involves comparing the results of the two, to best understand the research questions (Borrego 2009). In a triangulation design the researcher wants to employ both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data, integrating the results during the interpretation phase to address a broad range of research questions and thereby discern complex phenomena (Borrego 2009). Triangulation design also refers to using more than one method of data collection when researching social phenomena and can be incorporated within and across research strategies (Bryman and Bell 2007). Triangulation is very often used in a quantitative research strategy and can also be employed in a qualitative strategy. It has been used by many researchers as a process of cross-checking the findings from quantitative and qualitative research designs (Bryman and Bell 2007), as well as checking the validity of research findings as a whole (Bryman and Bell 2007).

2. **Embedded Designs:** where the data collection and analysis of a secondary data set occurs before, during and/or after the primary methods, in order to address different questions that call for different methods (Borrego 2009).
3. **Explanatory Designs:** where the integration occurs between phases. The quantitative results provide ideas for qualitative interviews and the qualitative results help to explain the quantitative results (Borrego 2009).
4. **Exploratory Designs:** where the researcher begins his research by primary qualitative research and then the findings are validated by quantitative results. This design is sometimes used to develop a standardized quantitative instrument in a relatively unstudied area (Borrego, 2009).

Adopting mixed research method works where, on the one hand, the quantitative approach alone would fail to reflect the whole picture, thus impairing the intended description and understanding (Cohen 2006; Fisher 2007; Peltomäki 2006). Moreover, even though it would reduce error and bias, it would at the same time neglect the contents, conditions and interactions that led to the situation under review (Fisher 2007) and would not sufficiently reflect the characteristics of complex social situations (Fisher 2007). On the other hand, adopting mixed methods research may in certain cases not be useful because the research findings produced in this way might contradict each other (Brown 2011). Mixed methods research is not easier than other methods: on the contrary, it requires a great deal of reflectivity during the entire research process (Brown 2011). Moreover,

Brown (2011), points out that mixed methods research requires more effort, time and resources for organizing and implementing the research project. Despite these challenges to mixed methods research, it was believed to give better opportunities to answer the research questions and better understanding of the phenomena, while allowing better evaluation of the extent to which the research findings could be trusted and enhancing any generalisability in the research findings (Bryman and Cassell 2006). Mixed methods research is valuable for solving problems, allowing conclusions to be drawn and a complete picture to appear, in particular in a complex social context (Earle 2009). Combining a quantitative method and a qualitative method allows access to different levels of reality (Bryman and Bell 2007). Moreover, the mixed research method is likely to increase acceptance of the research findings, since it produces valid, reliable and richer findings than either the qualitative or quantitative method alone does (Cohen 2006; Bryman and Cassell 2006).

3.4 Data Collection

According to Shahin (2011), data collection methods are considered an integral part of the research design. Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. Saunders et al. (2009) believe that a suitable data collection method greatly enhances the value of the research. Shahin (2011) argues that the selection of both the research method and the data collection approach is not affected by the research objectives alone, but also by the possible constraints on the research.

The data in this research were collected according to the survey methodology, as mentioned above, using both qualitative structured interviews and a quantitative questionnaire. Folkers (2008) says that survey

research aims to collect information about one or more groups of people, to learn about their experiences, opinions, attitudes and characteristics. Survey research was defined in Folkers (2008: 70) as:

“A form of social research in which one systematically asks many people the same questions, then records and analyses their answers”.

The research survey, based on the fixed research paradigm, requires the participants to self-disclose and the interpretation of the findings is limited to the constructs incorporated into the survey method (Blackmon 2008). It is worth noting, however, that a questionnaire is not the only data collection method that belongs to survey strategy. Structural observation and structured interviews also often belong to this group of strategies (Saunders et al. 2009). These three survey research methods for data collection are discussed in turn below.

3.4.1 Structured Observation

Structured observation is considered a systematic method and has a high level of predetermined structure (Saunders et al. 2009). Structured observation, according to Saunders et al., is a very useful research method for recording how participants behave and what they do. Moreover, structured observation, according to Saunders et al., allows for data collection at the time that they occur in their natural setting. Structured observation is also a very suitable method, especially if used in conjunction with other data collection methods. However, this method of observation method has the drawbacks of being time consuming and expensive (Saunders et al. 2009).

3.4.2 Interviews

Bryman and Bell (2007) believe that interviews may be considered one of the key tools in qualitative research, on which a large proportion of social science research relies to give better understanding of and more insight into research practices. Bryman and Bell add that qualitative interviewing is based on three major types of interview: structured, unstructured and semi-structured. The first type uses closed questions which help the respondents make up their mind quickly, the second tends to be very similar in character to conversation and the third refers to those interviews in which a respondent is asked a series of questions that generally form an interview schedule but can be varied in their sequence. Bryman and Bell remark that the interview process in unstructured and semi-structured interviews is flexible and that most qualitative interviews are close to one type or the other. In a structured interview, it is difficult for the interviewer to add new questions or to allow space for comments. The unstructured interview, very similar to a conversation, lets the interviewee respond freely to the interviewer's questions. The interviewer in this case responds only to the points that seem worth following up. In the semi-structured interview, the researcher has a list of questions, which is often referred to as an interview guide. All the questions in the guide are asked and all interviews employ similar wording for the questions (Bryman and Bell 2007). Semi-structured interviews provide rich data and foster the social reality, as described in his own words, of the person being interviewed (Bryman and Bell 2007). Additionally, semi-structured interviews provide a positive exchange between researcher and participant, are less threatening than structured

ones and can empower those involved to provide their own interpretations and meanings (Bryman and Bell 2007).

It should be noted that face-to-face interviews allow for rapport to develop quickly and create an atmosphere of trust in which the interviewee feels comfortable to talk about a number of issues (Bryman and Bell 2007). Furthermore, face-to-face interviews enable the interviewer to see the body language of the interviewee, which can reveal inconsistencies between what is said and what is meant (Bryman and Bell 2007). However, Bryman and Bell suggest that the limitations of qualitative interviews should be appreciated. They claim that potential problems may occur in interviews, related to *Reflexivity* and *Identity Work* that has recently attracted a great deal of attention in business and management research. Although Reflexivity (where the interviewee is encouraged to be reflective, self-conscious and self-critical) helps to gain insights into the data, Bryman and Bell argue that Reflexivity has several limitations such as: making interviewees feel inferior, worried about getting it right, uncomfortable when they are unprepared for a question or even feeling that some questions are pointless because the interviewer knows the answer better than they do. Regarding *Work Identity*, Bryman and Bell argue that difficulties with this occur when interviews involve a complex process of managing impressions as part of work identity, and interviewees are encouraged to explore practices and beliefs rather than knowledge. Such terms cause considerable discomfort for many interviewees when they are asked questions that are hard to answer especially for interviewees who are keen to present themselves as experts.

3.4.3 Questionnaires

Saunders et al (2009) find that the survey strategy of business and management research very often uses questionnaires which put the same set of questions to every respondent, because questionnaires provide an efficient way of collecting responses from large sample population before the data are analyzed. However, Saunders et al. warn that, by adopting questionnaires, researchers need to ensure that they are collecting the data required to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives of the research. Saunders et al. add that the use of questionnaires is influenced by several factors related to the research objectives and questions, such as the characteristics of the participants, the size of the sample population, and the types and numbers of questions needing to be answered. As one of the survey methods, the questionnaire is defined by Saunders et al (2009: 360) as follows:

“A general term to include all techniques of data collection in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order”.

Saunders et al. claimed that there are two different designs of questionnaire: self-administered questionnaires and interviewer-administered questionnaires. First, self-administered questionnaires, including internet questionnaires (administered electronically using the internet), postal questionnaires (posted to participants who return completed questionnaires by post), and delivery and collection questionnaires (delivered by hand to each participant and collected later), are usually completed by the participants. Second, interviewer-administered questionnaires have their answers recorded by the interviewer. Interviewer-administered

questionnaires, according to Saunders et al., include telephone questionnaires (questionnaires administered using the telephone) and structured interviews (questionnaires where the interviewer physically meets the participants and asks them questions face to face). It is worth noting that Bryman and Cassell (2006) claim that questionnaires have several disadvantages which an interview is free from. With a questionnaire, no-one can help a respondent who has difficulty in answering a question and the questionnaire gives no opportunity to probe respondents to elaborate an answer and poses difficulties if the questions are complex in structure or are open (Bryman and Cassell 2006). Moreover, the researcher can never be sure that the intended respondents have answered the questionnaire (Bryman and Cassell 2006). Researchers also cannot collect additional data, as they can in interviews, cannot help with difficulties when there are many questions to answer, cannot tell if a question is not appropriate for some respondents and have a greater risk of missing data (Bryman and Cassell 2006). Additionally, interviews provide a positive exchange between researcher and participant, are less threatening than sets of structured questions and can empower those involved to provide their own interpretations and meanings (Bryman and Bell 2007).

3.4.4 Constraints to Alternative Methods and Justification

The choice of research methods and a data collection instrument, as noted above, depends not only on the objectives of the research, but also on the actual and possible constraints that may arise during the research (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). In the present research, adopting structured observation was not feasible because it was difficult to get access to the researched organizations. Moreover, the researcher did

not adopt structured observation because it is time consuming and expensive. However, using mixed methods, in this case, structured interviews and questionnaires, was chosen as the most appropriate for the present research.

Before deciding on the most appropriate data collection method, and in order to arrange interviews, the researcher contacted ten strategic planning managers working in governmental organizations in Bahrain, in an attempt to assess the suitability of conducting research interviews there. The researcher experienced a number of difficulties in arranging interviews. First, it was difficult to contact interviewees to arrange meetings: the researcher sometimes had to make several phone calls before he could even speak to managers. Second, many managers refused to attend an interview and informed the researcher that this was mainly due to the confidentiality of their information and their busy schedules. Third, other managers stated that they might consider participating in a survey questionnaire. Fourth, some managers agreed to participate only if the questions asked were general and not specific. These difficulties can confidently be attributed to cultural and institutional factors.

The researcher also decided to use self-administered questionnaires, a data collection method that can be used in a large-scale quantitative research study (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). The questionnaire as a technique for surveying participants helped the researcher to collect a variety of data, including intentions, behaviours, attitude, expectations, perceptions, knowledge, motivations, understanding, opinions, actions and performance (Doherty 2010). Moreover, the survey questionnaire design in the present research allowed the impact of the

relationship between the research problem and the research questions to appear (Franklin 2011). Additionally, the questionnaire as a quantitative survey method was adequate in this research, in that it allowed facts and objects to be objectively and independently measured, increased credibility and provided repeatable and valid results (Creswell 2002; Folkers 2008). The questionnaire, as a method for collecting quantitative data in the present research, was cheaper, quicker and more convenient than the other qualitative methods, such as structured observation (Bryman and Cassell 2006). It should also be said that the choice of a questionnaire was connected to the sample size of the present research and was certainly appropriate, since the research sought opinions and attitudes with regard to strategic management and also described and identified the variability in different phenomena (Bryman and Bell 2007; Saunders et al. 2009).

4. Instrument design

The design of the research instrument is the next step after identifying the appropriate data collection method (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). Although designing an instrument is sometimes difficult, it helps a researcher to link the final results clearly with the research questions and also elicit accurate information to meet the research objectives (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). The survey instruments were specific to the present research and its questions were based on the literature of strategic management.

It should be noted that the face-to-face structured interviews were designed to allow for rapport to develop quickly and create an atmosphere of trust in which the interviewee felt comfortable to talk about a number of issues (Bryman and Bell 2007). Furthermore, face-to-face structured interviews enabled the interviewer to see the body language of the interviewee, which

can reveal inconsistencies between what is said and what is meant (Bryman and Bell 2007). All the questions of the interview were open-ended in order to discourage yes or no answers or other brief responses (Sumarjan 2011). The researcher developed an interview protocol to guide more comprehensive exploration of the research topic (Sumarjan 2011). The interview protocol was reviewed by 5 experts. A copy of the final interview protocol in English and Arabic is provided in the Appendices (B.1 & B.2).

It is worth noting that three of the interviews were conducted at the respondents' workplace and the remaining six interviews were conducted at the Bahrain Institute of Public Administration. Each interview was scheduled at a convenient time for both participants. Before starting the interview, each respondent was reminded of the security issues for storing their data, keeping the interview content and the respondents' data strictly anonymous and confidential. The main purpose of this was to make the participants feel comfortable (Cohen 2006). The objectives of the research and the use of its results were reviewed for this purpose, to increase the candor of the responses (Cohen 2006).

Before starting the interviews, e-mails were sent with a research abstract attached, to thank participants in advance for taking part. However, it is worth mentioning that the interview questions were not sent to them in advance. They were all told that they were welcome to ask questions about the research or opt out of it. A single digital recorder was used in all the interviews: these lasted from 30 to 45 minutes each, depending on the length of the answers.

When interviewing, the researcher adopted the following steps suggested by Martin (2011). First he welcomed and thanked the respondents. Then he

introduced himself and explained the purpose of the interview and the nature of the research. After this, he explained to them that the interview was voluntary and they could stop the dialogue at any point if they felt uncomfortable. Then the researcher proceeded with the interview, which he tape-recorded. At the end of the interview, the researcher thanked the respondents, telling them that they would receive an electronic copy of the tape to review. Finally the researcher made a transcript of the interview, stored it in a database and stored the print version also.

No-one interrupted any of the interviews by personal intervention or telephone. The time during the interviews was effectively managed. It should be recalled that the researcher's role as in the interviews was to elicit responses to the questions in an open-minded and non-judgmental manner (Cohen 2006). If the respondents supplied any unusual or unrelated information in answering these questions, this was not disputed and nor did the interviewer try to change the respondent's mind or lead the questioning in any way, but rather asked supplementary questions to clarify (Cohen 2006). Respondents were sometimes asked to define the meaning of the jargon and acronyms that they had used (Cohen 2006). No answers were interrupted: instead the tone was kept attentive, courteous and respectful (Cohen 2006). All verbal and non-verbal reactions were suppressed so as to prevent bias or cause the participants to lose focus (Cohen 2006).

All the interviews were conducted, as far as possible, to give an impression of interest, sincerity and a high degree of professionalism (Cohen 2006). Most of the questions asked in the interviews were designed to be direct, uncontroversial and easy to understand. Immediately after finishing the interviews and recording the transcripts, the researcher sent a copy to the

respondents to review and confirm. This gave them the chance to edit and modify their responses and to feel sure that their responses reflected what they had wanted to say (Martin 2011).

The questionnaire as an instrument for data collection in the present research was deductive in nature and was used to generate, support, to statistically test existing theories and to integrate different perspectives to help in data interpretation (Saunders et al. 2009). The items in the questionnaire were used to measure such variables as the nature of strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategy evaluation, the satisfaction of strategic planning and strategic management (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012). The questionnaire instrument as shown in Table 1 has six parts and is set out in the Appendices (A1 & A 2). It consists of 78 questions developed from the review of the literature, as mentioned above. Part one, with 15 questions, is about strategic plan formulation that includes developing a clear vision, mission, values, strategic and operational objectives. Part one also includes developing and prioritizing clear performance indicators, involving internal and external stakeholders, ensuring adequate financial and technological resources, and designing proper organizational structure. Part two, with 24 questions, is about strategic plan implementation, and includes, vision integration, effective internal and external communication, skills and knowledge development, decision making, commitment, support, leadership, and reward systems. Part three, with 11 questions, is about strategic plan evaluation, and includes the evaluation of middle and top management, control, coordination, and the importance of strategic planning. Part four, with 18 questions, is about the transition from strategic planning to strategic management, and includes involvement, organizational communication,

performance measurement and data sharing, linkage to performance management, culture, and structure and human resources modifications. Part five, with 6 questions, is about the satisfaction of strategic planning and includes satisfaction with organizational outcomes and services, satisfaction with operations and implementation, and satisfaction with the overall strategic planning process. Finally, part six, with 4 questions, elicits general personal and organizational information about the research participants, and includes gender, managerial level, and working experience. In each case the respondents were asked to indicate the level of their agreement with the following statements.

No	Strategic plan formulation / Sample questions	References
1	We have a clear vision.	Elbanna 2010
2	We have a clear mission statement.	Elbanna 2010
3	We have clear organizational values.	Elbanna 2010
4	We have clear strategic objectives.	Plant 2009
5	We have operational objectives.	Plant 2009
6	We have developed clear performance indicators.	Plant 2006
7	We have clearly prioritized our performance indicators.	Plant 2006
8	Staffs in lower grades have been involved in strategic planning development.	Poister 2010
9	The internal advisors have played a significant role in strategic planning development.	Ofori and Atiogbe 2012
10	The external consultants have played a significant role in strategic planning development.	Ofori and Atiogbe 2012
11	We have adequate financial resources for strategic planning.	Plant 2006
12	We have adequate technological resources for strategic planning.	Plant 2006
13	Our strategic planning procedures can be described as largely structured with using planning manual.	Plant 2006
14	Developing new ways of raising income is a major part of our strategy.	Poister 2010
15	Our organization welcomes private-sector involvement and partnership with others.	Poister 2010

No	Strategic plan implementation / Sample questions	References
1	Our vision is aligned with lower staff operations.	Poister 2010
2	There is a link between strategic planning and the decision-making process.	Poister 2010
3	Our strategic plan is well understood before any significant actions are taken.	Poister 2010
4	We have effective internal communication among all employees.	Poister 2010
5	We have effective communication with the public.	Poister 2010
6	There is effective internal communication and collaboration between most departments.	Pina et al. 2011
7	We have enough staff for strategic planning implementation.	Poister 2010
8	There is enough training for employees.	Plant 2009
9	Strategic objectives are implemented properly.	Elbanna 2013
10	Operational objectives are implemented properly.	Elbanna 2013
11	Divisional managers have the right knowledge and skills for strategic planning.	Elbanna 2013
12	Lower-ranking employees are familiar with strategic planning.	Elbanna 2013
13	The duties, tasks and responsibilities are properly explained to lower level staff.	Elbanna 2013
14	The lower level staff are committed to attaining our organizational objectives.	Elbanna 2013
15	Top management set good role models of strong and inspiring leadership.	Elbanna 2013
16	Top management ensures the best possible integration of processes, structures, resources and people.	Poister and Streib 2005
17	Top management is committed to the implementation of our vision.	Plant 2009
18	Top management supports us in the implementation of the strategic plan.	Plant 2009
19	Middle management is committed to the implementation of our vision.	Plant 2009
20	Middle management supports us in the implementation of the strategic plan.	Plant 2009
21	The lower level staff are committed to attaining our organizational vision.	Poister 2010
22	We have a solid reporting system using adequate technology.	Poister 2010
23	The reward systems encourage success.	Plant 2006
24	Improving our current services is a major part of our approach.	Plant 2006
No	Strategic plan evaluation / Sample questions	References
1	The evaluation of middle managers is based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan.	Poister and Streib 2005
2	The evaluation of lower level staff is based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan.	Poister and Streib 2005
3	Top management sees strategic planning as critical to an organization's success.	Elbanna 2013

4	Middle management sees strategic planning as critical to an organization's success.	Elbanna 2013
5	Our lower level employees believe that strategic planning is beneficial.	Elbanna 2013
6	There is a proper relationship between the groups for the formulation and those for the implementation of strategic planning.	Elbanna 2013
7	There is enough time for strategy implementation.	Elbanna 2013
8	We have proper control over the implementation stage.	Elbanna 2013
9	We have proper strategic planning evaluation at regular intervals.	Elbanna 2013
10	There is no competition between activities.	Elbanna 2013
11	We have proper organizational structure that aids strategic implementation.	Elbanna 2013
No	Transition to strategic management / Sample questions	References
1	Key external stakeholders have been involved in developing our strategic plan.	Poister 2010
2	We have a solid collaborative relationship with key external stakeholders.	Poister 2010
3	All the units within our organization have developed their own operational plans.	Poister 2010
4	Top management is committed to managing for results.	Poister 2010
5	Top management uses strategic planning to drive the decision-making process.	Poister 2010
6	Top management aligns a fixed financial budget to each operational objective.	Poister 2010
7	Top management allocates the needed resources to fund new strategic initiatives.	Poister 2010
8	Top management cascades the strategic plan internally all the way down the organization.	Poister 2010
9	Top management links the implementation of organizational objectives with individual performance appraisals.	Poister 2010
10	Top management monitors performance measures to ensure the proper implementation of strategic plan.	Poister 2010
11	Top management monitors external trends and internal performance continuously and revises strategy if needed.	Poister 2010
12	Top management reviews performance data on a regular basis for making decisions and taking corrective action to improve the organizational performance.	Poister 2010
13	Top management has no problem in reporting on its performance.	Poister 2010
14	Top management has made some changes in organizational structure to support the strategic plan.	Poister 2010
15	Top management has made some changes in human resource practices to support the strategic plan.	Poister 2010

16	Top management has tried to modify organizational culture to make it more compatible with the strategic plan.	Poister 2010
17	Our organization is communicating its performance information to a wide range of external stakeholders on a regular basis.	Poister 2010
18	Our strategic planning process is closely linked with the performance management processes at all organizational levels.	Poister 2010
No	Satisfaction/Sample questions	References
1	I am satisfied with my organization's strategic planning process.	Kabir 2007Gantick et al. 2002,
2	I am satisfied with the implementation of strategic andoperational objectives.	Kabir 2007Gantick et al. 2002,
3	I am satisfied with my organization's strategic planning outcomes.	Kabir 2007Gantick et al. 2002,
4	I am satisfied with the time, cost, and efforts spent in strategic planning.	Poister 2010
5	I am satisfied with the quality of services delivery because of strategic planning.	Plant 2009
6	I am satisfied with the overall organizational improvement as a direct result of strategic planning process.	Poister 2010
No	General information / Sample questions	References
1	Number of full time employees?	Elbanna 2013, Samour 2010
2	Your managerial level?	Elbanna 2013, Samour 2010
3	Gender?	Elbanna 2013, Samour 2010
4	Number of years at organization?	Elbanna 2013, Samour 2010

Table (1): Instrument Design

The core of the survey questionnaire consisted of some sets of five-point **Likert-scale** items, with answers ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) as shown in Table 2.The researcher chose **Likert-scale**

items because they are easy to understand, take less time to answer, and it is highly desirable in numerically ordering respondents (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011).

Level	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
score	1	2	3	4	5

Table (2): Likert-scale – Source Data Analysis

Regarding the length of the questionnaire, Saunders et al (2009) submit that a questionnaire of up to eight pages is generally appropriate. It should be noted that the English version of the questionnaire in this research occupied six pages, the Arabic version, five, excluding the cover pages in each case. To avoid eyestrain, the questions in the questionnaire were neatly organized and conveniently spaced (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). Moreover, in order to eliminate analysis errors, the questionnaire was designed to represent the research objectives, moving from one topic to another logically and completing one topic before moving on to the next (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). In order to ensure accurate responses and to generate a high response rate, the researcher designed the questionnaire to make it easy way to answer and tried to frame the first few questions in the questionnaire in a way that would be attract the interest of a large number of participants (Doherty 2010). The questionnaire used simple language to avoid ambiguity and help participants to read and understand everything, since this would encourage them to complete the questionnaire.

5. Validity and Reliability

After developing the research instrument and defining the variables, the instrument had to be guaranteed an accurate measure: hence, the measures were examined for validity and reliability (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). Doherty (2010) states that these terms are used in connection with the extent to which the research findings reflect the phenomenon being studied. Moreover, Shahin (2011) points out that validity relates to the appropriate use of the measure, whether the researcher is measuring the right concept, while reliability relates to the consistency and stability of the measurement. Shahin adds that reliability and validity are separate but still closely related concepts and that a measure may be consistent (reliable) but not accurate (valid), while conversely it may be accurate but not consistent. It is worth noting that, to reduce the risk of getting wrong answers to the research questions, the researcher pays attention to these two particular research elements (Saunders et al. 2009). The terms reliability and validity are discussed in turn below.

5.1 Validity

The term *validity* means the degree to which an assessment method measures what it is intended to measure (Saunders et al. 2009). Saunders et al. define it as being concerned with the extent that the research findings are really about what they appear to be about. There are three ways to evaluate instrument validity: through content validity, statistical validity (which includes criterion-related validity) and construct validity (Saunders et al. 2009). Content validity aims to provide adequate coverage of the investigative questions. Criterion-related validity is concerned with the ability of the instrument to make accurate predictions. Construct validity refers to

the extent to which the instrument questions actually measure the presence of the constructs that the researcher intends to measure.

In the present research, a content validity test was conducted by consulting a group of experts in order to evaluate whether the instrument's questions agreed with the scope of the items and the extent to which these items reflected the concept of the problem in the research. To this end, and to assess the validity of the survey content, the present researcher was assisted by a panel of five experts in one or more areas of strategic management, governmental leadership and research methodology. The researcher sent each expert a copy of the draft instrument, research objectives and instructions, for their evaluation and feedback. The final draft was sent to the expert panel for approval after the revisions and modifications were completed according to the initial panel's recommendations. The group of experts finally evaluated the research instrument statistically and agreed that it was well designed to test and assesses the relations between the research variables. Additionally, the present researcher conducted one statistical test in order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire instrument. The criterion-related validity test (Pearson test) was adopted in the present research as shown in Table 3 to measure the correlation coefficient between each paragraph in one field and the whole field (Saunders et al. 2009).

		Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation	Gender	Working Experience	Proper Control of Implementation
Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation	Pearson Correlation	1	-.065	-.071	.546**
	Sig (2-tailed)		.288	.244	.000
	N	270	270	270	270
Gender	Pearson Correlation	-.065	1	-.131*	.011
	Sig (2-tailed)	.288		.031	.861
	N	270	270	270	270
Working Experience	Pearson Correlation	-.071	-.131*	1	-.054
	Sig (2-tailed)	.244	.031		.381
	N	270	270	270	270
Proper Control of Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.546**	.011	-.054	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.861	.381	
	N	270	270	270	270

Table 3: Criterion-related Validity Test – Internal Consistency

5.2 Reliability

The term *reliability* is about correctness, consistency, and precision as well as the truthfulness of the measurement procedures used in investigation (Doherty 2010; Saunders et al. 2009). The term *reliability* shows how far a measure is free from bias and thus ensures the consistency of the instrument's variables (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). Reliability reflects the consistency and stability with which the research instrument measures the concept and thus the goodness of the measure (Shahin 2011). Saunders et al (2009) also state that reliability refers to the extent to which the data collection tools or the procedures of analysis produce consistent findings.

To ensure reliability, the researcher conducted an internal consistency test, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. This test measures the reliability of the questionnaire between each field and the mean of all the fields of the questionnaire. It is worth noting that the normal range of Cronbach's

Coefficient Alpha is between 0.0 and +1.0. It is also worth noting that the higher values of Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha tend to reflect a higher degree of internal consistency. As shown in Table 4, the value of the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of all the research variables is high, with a percentage of 0.974%, and this endorses the reliability of the questionnaire used as a data collection instrument in the present research.

Section	No of Items	Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha
All research variables measured according to a Likert Scale	78	.974

Table 4: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha-Internal Consistency

However, Robson (2002) in Saunders et al (2009) says that reliability is subject to four threats, as follows.

- 1. Participant error:** this error may occur because of the low desire of respondents to answer the questionnaire. To prevent this error, by adopting a self-delivery and pick-up methodology, the researcher ensured that only the interested respondents were answering the questionnaire.
- 2. Participant bias:** this bias maybe worst within organizations which have an authoritarian management style, since participants may say what they think their bosses want them to say. To prevent this bias, the researcher when distributing the questionnaire stressed to the respondents that their identity would remain confidential and they should write what they felt convinced of.

3. **Observer error:** this may occur if the researcher uses more than one style of asking questions. To prevent this error, the researcher tried to maintain only one style in all sections of the questionnaire.
4. **Observer bias:** this may occur if the answers of the respondents can be interpreted in different ways. To prevent this bias, the researcher interpreted the responses using only one analytical tool for each method of data collection. Thus he used the SPSS Software program for analyzing the quantitative data.

It is worth noting, however, that reliability alone is not sufficient to assess whether or not the instrument is adequate (Shahin 2011). Thus, the validity of the findings and conclusions of this research were tested, as mentioned before. To generate meaningful findings and results, it is important for researchers to seriously consider the threats to the overall validity of their research (Ayers 2010). In order to further reduce the threats to both reliability and validity, the researcher chose a neutral time for the respondents to answer the questionnaire so as to reduce participant error to the lowest possible level; he also informed the respondents about data confidentiality and took care when analyzing the data to ensure that they revealed what he thought they did (Saunders et al. 2009). Moreover, Franklin (2011) raises the point that the reliability and validity of an instrument may be influenced by both the internal and external validity of the research. The researcher ensured the internal validity of the present research by using a well standardized questionnaire for data collection to give less room for alternative explanations of the results (Franklin 2011). Its external validity was ensured because he was able to generalize the

respondents' findings about the organization to a larger target population in other settings (Franklin 2011). With the above in mind, it is worth reporting that the present research proved that the questionnaire as a data collection instrument was valid, reliable, and ready to be distributed to the sample population.

6. Translation process

Since this research was undertaken in an Arab country, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic and back-translated into English. This process was important for reducing cultural differences and producing accurate findings (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). The English version of the questionnaire was translated into Arabic by an accredited translator. Next this Arabic version was back-translated into English by an accredited bilingual translator whose first language was Arabic, to ensure an equivalent translation and to adjust minor inconsistencies (Saunders et al. 2009; Shahin 2011). The initial questionnaire was then modified for consistency, formulated and prepared for distribution. A copy of the final questionnaire in English and Arabic is provided in the Appendices (A1 & A 2).

7. Field Test

In the present research, a small-scale field test of the questionnaire was conducted. It targeted ten participants: five academic staff and five professional employees working in governmental organizations in Bahrain. The main purpose of a field test is to seek the participants' opinion of the questionnaire so as to ensure its validity and also its operationalization towards the relevant content domain (Doherty 2010; Saunders et al. 2009). It is also intended to give more insight into people and problems, as a basis for successful research (Cohen 2006; Saunders et al. 2009). It should be noted

that the field test was clearly explained to all the participants, in order to ensure a comprehensive feedback that would help to improve the content of the questionnaire (Doherty 2010; Saunders et al. 2009). Before the field test the researcher ascertained that the participants were willing to answer questions on whether the tools used were reliable and suitable for collecting the required data: how much time would be needed to answer the questions: and whether the questions were clear (Doherty 2010; Saunders et al. 2009). The participants in the field test said that the average completion time for the questionnaire was 10 minutes, which they found adequate. It should be added that the participants said that they had no problems in answering the questions, apart from two to three of them, and that they found it viable for the proposed research. Hence, they recommended starting the pilot study after minor modifications to improve the scale and format of the questionnaire if they were needed. After obtaining the ethical approval of the University of Bradford, the researcher was then able to start conducting the pilot study.

8. Pilot Study

In order to ensure the reliability of the research instrument, a pilot study was next undertaken. Saunders et al (2009) have stated that the main role of participants in the pilot study is to complete and evaluate the research instrument. Saunders et al. adds that the researcher modifies and changes the research instrument by considering the pilot participants' comments and concerns. There are several benefits in conducting a pilot study, according to Saunders et al (2009). It improves data collection and the techniques adopted for data scoring, and it assists in the revision of measurements, ensuring that data patterns will reveal the expected results, that the sample

is big enough, that the data collection instruments are sensitive; it also establishes overall procedural accuracy and saves time and resources by preventing mistakes before the main research begins. The pilot study in the present research was a very important preliminary to distributing the self-completed questionnaire to the research sample (Bryman and Bell 2007). According to Bryman and Bell (2007), in survey research, a pilot study is highly desirable; this was found to be true for the present research, for the following reasons. First, since the research planned to ask mainly closed questions in the questionnaire survey, the researcher was able to ask open questions in the pilot study and thus to generate the fixed-choice answers. Second, piloting the questionnaire provided the researcher with the needed confidence and experience. Third, piloting the questionnaire survey gave the researcher a chance to identify and remove questions that the respondents might find uncomfortable or confusing. Fourth, the pilot study helped the researcher to determine what instructions should accompany the survey questionnaire. Finally, the pilot study enabled the researcher to assess the flow of the questions and adjust some of them to improve the presentation of the questionnaire.

The pilot study in this research targeted managerial employees working in governmental organizations in Bahrain. It was intended to collect some small-scale data randomly from a sample of 20 knowledgeable, experienced and qualified professionals and in this way determine the reliability of the measuring instrument, and to elicit suitable and approximate information about the variances needed for an analysis of power and a suitable sample size for the future full-scale study (Doherty 2010; Saunders et al. 2009). The 20 selected professionals were governmental employees with backgrounds

in business, finance, HRM, the law, IT and decision- making. Their answers revealed a need for minor modifications: hence some items in the questionnaire were reserved in order to reduce the degree of bias (Elbanna 2009). The number of 20 selected participants in the pilot test is appropriate according to Saunders et al (2009), who recommended that a minimum number for a pilot test is 10 participants.

9. Sampling Technique and Procedure

In social research, the unit of analysis refers to the entities under study (Kao 2011). A variety of units of analysis is possible, such as individual people, groups, organizations, cities and social artefacts (Kao 2011). Saunders et al (2009) say that researchers should make a logical choice of a sample population in a particular research study. Saunders et al. divide sampling techniques into two types, namely, probability (representative) sampling and non-probability (judgmental) sampling. Saunders et al. describe probability sampling as more closely related to the survey research strategy where the researcher makes inferences from a sample about a whole population in order to meet the research objectives and to answer the research questions. Non-probability sampling, he continues, is more closely related to exploratory research and the sample population can be selected purposively. He adds that probability sampling is used when the researcher aims to generalize his findings to a particular population, while non-probability sampling is used when there is no need to generalize. Saunders et al. also argued that the larger the sample size the lower the likely error in generalizing to the target population. Moreover, Saunders et al. claimed that a sample size of 30 for statistical analysis presents a useful rule of thumb for the smallest number in each category in the overall sample.

In this research, the unit of analysis was individual people from various governmental organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The number of participants in the present research combined well defined larger quantitative samples. Here, probability sampling selected randomly was used for the quantitative data collection that used a questionnaire as its survey instrument. The researcher adopted a probability sampling technique, using the random selection method that guaranteed an equal probability of having any member of the population as a participant (Doherty 2010; Saunders et al. 2009).

The respondents, as noted above, were high-ranking Bahraini civil servants, including top managers, departmental managers and internal experts. The researched organizations were 32 governmental organizations from a total of 44 governmental organizations in the public sector of Bahrain. The researcher used help from Bahrain's Institute of Public Administration (BIPA) to access and collect data. It should be noted that BIPA agreed to help in this issue after receiving a formal letter from the University Of Bradford School Of Management to help the researcher in his data collection. BIPA as a governmental body holds many training sessions for governmental employees on its premises every year.

The researcher used stratified random sampling, for which he divided the training programmes into three categories in the same proportion as they represent in the population: Leadership programmes (2 out of 3 courses), Induction programmes (2 courses out of 3), and Shorttraining courses (8 out of 12 courses). The researcher then divided the governmental employees within these 12 training courses into four managerial levels (Top management, Middle Management, Lower-level staff, and others) and into

genders (Male and Female), then assigned a unique number to each case in the sample population. 300 questionnaires in all were distributed. 270 of the questionnaires were accurately filled and returned. The response rate was high, at 90%. This response rate was achieved because of the personal delivery and pick-up system adopted, and because of the help of Bahrain's Institute of Public Administration (BIPA) in collecting the data. The research sampling is reflected in Table 5, as follows.

		Managerial Level								Total
		Top Management		Middle Management		Lower-ranking staff		Others		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Gender	Male	7	70	67	45	39	44	9	39	122
	Female	3	30	81	55	50	56	14	61	148
Total		10	100	148	100	89	100	23	100	270

Table 5: Research Sampling

10. Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues occur in all research phases from the research problem statement to the dissemination of the research (Martin 2011). Cooper and Schindler (2008) in Saunders et al (2009) considered ethics as norms or standards of behaviour that guide moral choices about our behaviour and our relationships with others. Saunders et al (2009) state that the term ethics refers to the appropriateness of the researcher's behaviour towards the rights of those participants who may be affected by his research. Saunders et al. also point out that research ethics refers to the extent to which the researcher has formulated and clarified the research subject, research design, access to data, data collection, methods of storing and analyzing

data and finally the writing of the research findings in the most responsible and honest way. Determining practical and ethical problems and also determining appropriate methods for overcoming these problems were the main concerns at the beginning of the present research, because of the danger of misleading or unsuitable data (Polonsky 1998). The researcher had to be sure that any participant in the research was protected from unintentional harm, be it illegal jeopardy, psychological abuse or physical harm (Franklin 2011). In addition, the participants were told that they had the right to participate voluntarily and to withdraw from the research at any stage (Polonsky 1998). The researcher also ensured that he could identify and address key ethical issues in his fieldwork, mainly when facing ethical dilemmas in the course of conducting the research (Polonsky 1998). Moreover, personal information and the responses of the participants were kept confidential and protected from public scrutiny. They were made anonymous and the participants' identity was protected before, during and after the research process: the survey responses had to remain anonymous and confidential between the participants and the researcher (Doherty 2010). The researcher additionally ensured that the participants' information, raw data, data analysis and findings were stored out of reach of any third party: hard copies in a secure storage place and soft copies by password protection (Doherty 2010; Franklin 2011).

It should be noted that the ethical approval for this research was granted by the Humanities, Social & Health Sciences Research Ethics Panel at the University of Bradford. The purpose of the Ethics Panel was to provide and ensure the ethical treatment and protection of the human participants as well as their records. Finally, it should be noted that the researcher followed all

the necessary survey procedures and processes according to the research purpose and took all the necessary steps, as well as complying with an acceptable body of research protocols necessary to protect participants' private information and responses, because they were considered a research population of vulnerable human subjects.

11. Time Horizon

Saunders et al. (2009) give researchers the option of following the 'snapshot' time horizon called cross-sectional, or the 'diary' time horizon called longitudinal in their research. Bryman and Bell (2007) comment that a cross-sectional design is likely to be a social survey design, involving the collection of quantitative data on more than one case at a single point of time in connection with two or more variables that are tested to detect patterns of association. The present research was based on cross-sectional design because of time constraints and because it adopted a survey strategy to collect the data for analysis (Saunders et al. 2009). This was done because it was the most appropriate research design for comparing and constructing the beliefs or perceptions of a population (Steadham 2006) and to prevent any changes over a single period (Saunders et al. 2009).

12. Data Analysis

In this research, the qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed using NVivo software and the quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS software, as follows.

As an effective tool for qualitative data analysis (Atherton and Elsmore 2007), the qualitative data analysis software package NVivo was used for the initial stages of the coding process. The researcher adopted NVivo

(Version 22) qualitative software using predefined and emergent coding (Ogata 2011). The qualitative analysis involved thematic coding, particularly of the structured interviews and respondents' comments (Ogata 2011). The themes used were derived from key strategic management themes in the public sector literature. The themes fell into three categories: strategic plan formulation, strategic plan implementation, and strategic plan evaluation. The themes under strategic plan formulation are clear vision, clear strategic and operational objectives, and clear performance indicators. The themes under strategic plan implementation are adequate financial and technological resources, adequate organizational structure and reward systems, effective internal and external communications, and adequate decision making process. Finally the themes under strategic plan evaluation are proper reporting systems, staff commitment, cooperation and competition between activities, top management support, cascading plans, Role model leadership, and performance review and evaluation.

Regarding the quantitative analysis, Saunders et al (2009) reported that the term 'quantitative data' refers to all the numerical data that can usefully be quantified to help answer the research questions and meet the research objectives. They also reported that researchers use quantitative analysis techniques such as graphs, charts, tables and statistics in order to explore, present, describe, and examine relationships and trends within the data collected.

In this research, the quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical package for social sciences) software. It is worth reporting that the quantitative data analysis started by recording the number of questionnaires returned. The researcher analyzed the data from the

questionnaire to draw statistical conclusions to advance the research purpose (Franklin 2011; Saunders et al. 2009). All the data were classified and coded and then reviewed for potential errors (Franklin 2011; Saunders et al. 2009). Then the collected data were descriptively analyzed by measuring the frequency distributions of the responses. In the quantitative data analysis, a descriptive statistical method including measures of correlation, measures of central tendency and frequency distributions helped to examine the relationship between variables (Saunders et al. 2009; Snowden 2002). Descriptive analysis is conducted in order to describe the exact signs of subsequent development in the relationship between the research object and other social phenomena (Nurmandi 2011; Saunders et al. 2009).

13. Chapter Summary

To meet the research objectives and to answer the research questions, the present research adopted a descriptive design to provide information about the behaviour, attitudes, and other characteristics of governmental employees in the public sector of Bahrain. The descriptive design was applicable in this research because it provided a profile of the variables and clearly described present events and provided interpretation, classifications, contrasts and integrated results. The survey strategy was held to be more appropriate in the present research than other research strategies, because it would help the present researcher to examine the relationships between the variables and to suggest and produce a model of these relationships.

The survey questionnaire design in the present research was considered the best strategy to show the impact of the relationship between the research problem and the research questions. Additionally, the questionnaire as a quantitative survey method was adequate in this research, allowing facts and objects to be objectively and independently measured, thus increasing credibility and providing repeatable and valid results.

The present research adopted the survey in a form of cross-sectional research as the most appropriate research design because it was intended to compare and construct a population's beliefs or perceptions, and to prevent any possibility of change over a single period.

The researcher conducted a pilot study to determine suitable instructions for completing the survey interviews and questionnaires. The pilot study enabled the researcher to assess the flow of questions and to adjust some of them, improving both interview and questionnaire and methods. The pilot study targeted managerial employees working in governmental

organizations in Bahrain. It was intended to collect some small-scale data randomly from knowledgeable, experienced and qualified professionals to determine the reliability of the measurement instrument, to make minor modifications and to reduce the degree of bias.

The sample population in this research came from low and high-ranking officials in governmental organizations in Bahrain. The range of officials included top management, departmental managers, lower level employees, and internal experts. Non-probability and probability sampling were used in collecting both qualitative and quantitative data with structured interviews and questionnaires as the survey instruments. In this research, the qualitative data from structured interviews were analysed using NVIVO software, and the quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software. The researcher followed all the necessary ethical procedures and processes according to the research purpose and employed all the necessary steps, as well as an acceptable body of the research protocols necessary to protect respondents' private information and responses, since they are considered vulnerable areas of the research population.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

1. Introduction

It should be noted that descriptive statistics were adopted in Chapter Four to analyze the data by calculating the mean and standard deviation for each survey item: correlation analysis was used to explore the strategic management elements that were likely to be related to the transition from strategic planning to the strategic management approach. In order to answer the first research question, this chapter explores how public sector organizations in Bahrain developed, implemented and evaluated their strategic plans. In order to answer the second and third research questions, this chapter explores and investigates the elements that were likely to be related to the transition from traditional strategic planning to the strategic management approach. Chapter Four in the current research is divided into eight sections and explores the quantitative findings generated from the analyzed questionnaires. Section one explores the profile of the sample, section two assesses the importance of strategic planning according to the sample, section three is concerned with strategic plan formulation, section four is concerned with strategic plan implementation, section five is concerned with strategic plan evaluation, section six assesses the satisfaction level of strategic planning, section seven is concerned with strong and inspiring leadership, and finally section eight investigates the process of transition from traditional strategic planning to strategic management in the organizations under scrutiny.

2. Section One: Sample Profile and Characteristics

It is worth noting that 300 questionnaires were distributed, and a total of 270 usable questionnaires were collected. Questionnaires with a few items left unanswered were considered usable (sporadic non-response) and a sample mean was used as a replacement for the unanswered items (Elbanna 2009). The response rate was 90 percent. This high response rate, as mentioned before, was because a personal delivery and pick-up system to collect the completed questionnaires was adopted by the researcher and also because of the assistance provided by the Bahrain Institute of Public Administration.

270 questionnaires were collected from 32 governmental organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Table 6 lists these organizations as follows.

No	Organization	No	Organization
1	Ministry of the Interior	17	Shura Council
2	Ministry of Labour	18	Polytechnic University
3	Ministry of Health	19	University of Bahrain
4	Ministry of Finance	20	Civil Service Bureau
5	Ministry of Housing	21	Social Insurance Organization
6	Ministry of Education	22	Central Bank of Bahrain
7	Ministry of Transport	23	E-Government Authority
8	Ministry of Industry and Commerce	24	Council of Representatives
9	Ministry of State for Cabinet Affairs	25	Supreme Judicial Council
10	Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs	26	Royal Charity Organization
11	Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development	27	Information Affairs Authority
12	Electricity and Water Authority	28	National Oil and Gas Authority
13	Ministry of Works, Municipalities' Affairs and Urban Planning	29	Institute of Public Administration
14	Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission	30	Ministry of Shura and Representative Council Affairs
15	General Organization for Youth and Sports	31	Central Informatics Organization
16	Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training	32	Bahrain Institute for Political Development

Table 6: Sample Governmental organizations

The findings as shown in Figure 3 also indicate that 83.70% of the participants were working in large organizations, while 8.15% of the participants were working in medium-sized organizations and 8.15% of them were working in small organizations (Elbanna 2010).

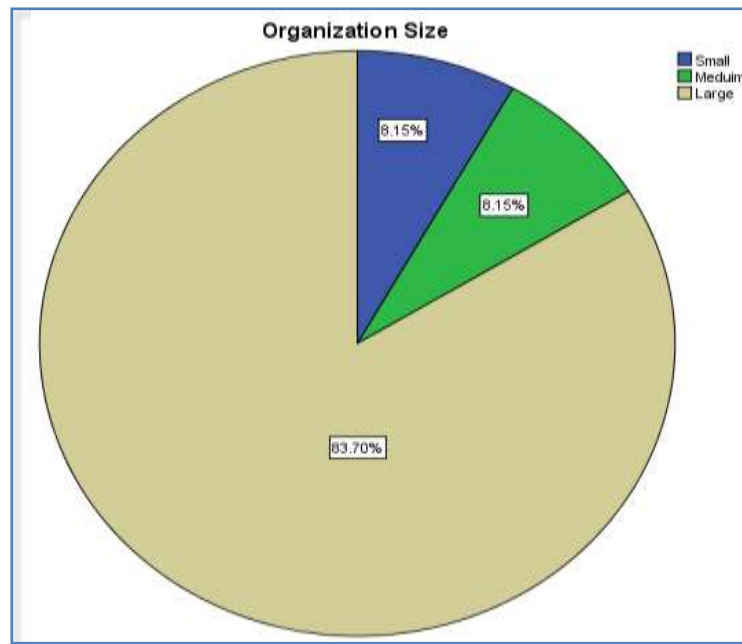


Figure 3: Participants by Organizational Size

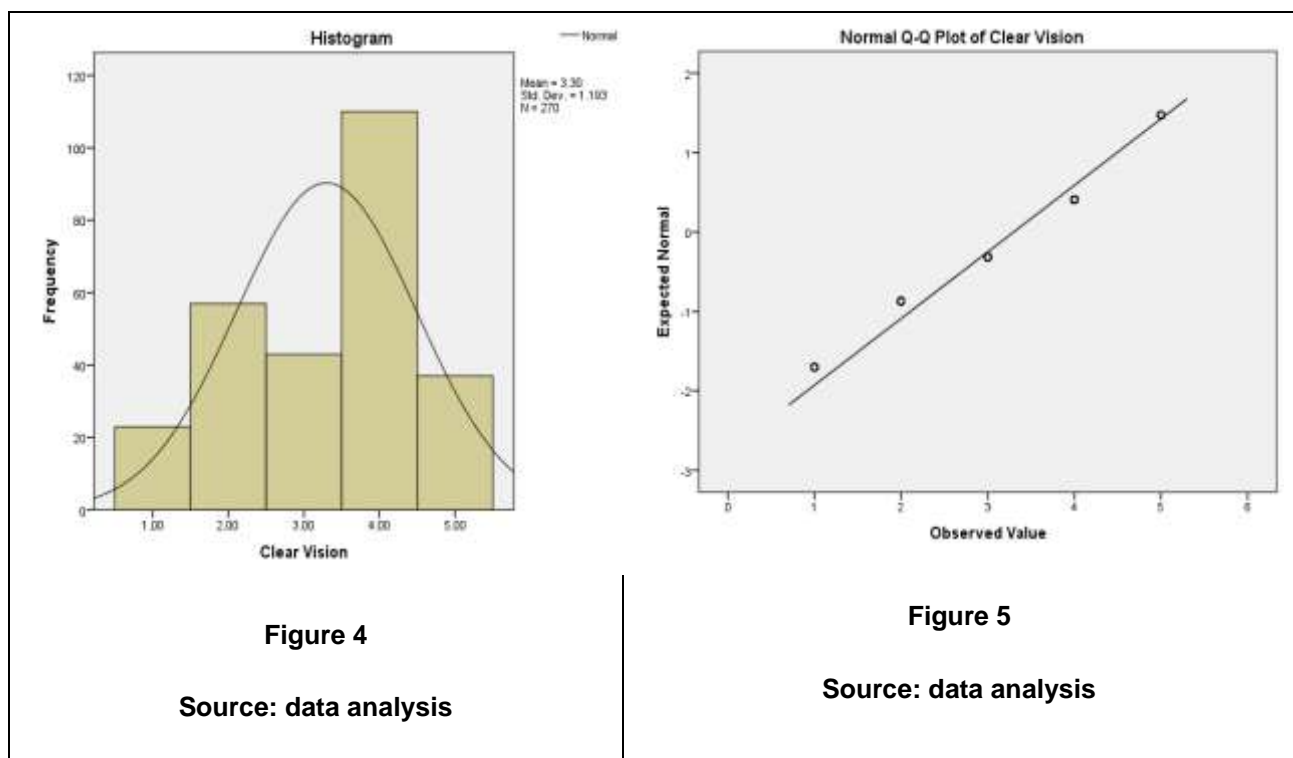
Moreover, as shown in Table 7 below, the survey of governmental employees in the sample included their gender, managerial level, and gender versus managerial level. The findings revealed that in the sample who participated in this research were 122 males, a percentage of 45.2% of the whole and 148 females, a percentage of 54.8%. Regarding the managerial level, the findings revealed that 148 participants (54.8%) were middle managers, and 89 participants were lower level staff (33%), while 10 participants (3.7%) were top managers and 23 participants (8.5%) were reported as 'other'.

The findings also revealed that the top management participants consisted of 7 males (70%) and 3 females (30%), while the middle managers comprised 67 males (45%) and 81 females (55%). Lower-ranking staff were represented by 39 males (44%) and 50 females (56%). Finally, the participants from other managerial levels were made up of 9 males (39%) and 14 females (61%).

		Managerial Level								Total
		Top Management		Middle Management		Lower-ranking staff		Others		
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Gender	Male	7	70	67	45	39	44	9	39	122
	Female	3	30	81	55	50	56	14	61	148
Total		10	100	148	100	89	100	23	100	270

Table 7: Gender versus managerial rank

It is important to establish the distribution of values for all the research variables that contain numerical data before starting any statistical tests (Saunders et al. 2009). Since the data collected in this research with its 270 participants are large, skewness and kurtosis indicators of data distribution were used, bearing in mind that the Z-value should be between +2.58 and -2.58 (Saunders et al. 2009). On this basis, as shown in Figures 4 and 5, the visual inspection of the data variables showed that the histograms are normally curved, and the normal Q-Q plots are along the line. Hence, it can be assumed that the data were a moderate normally asymmetrically distributed in terms of skewness and kurtosis, so parametric tests had to be used (Saunders et al. 2009).



In addition, a test for one variable, that of developing clear organizational vision in Table 8 below reflects the normality distribution as a sample of all the survey variables.

Variable	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Std error	Z-value	Std error	Z-value
Developing Clear Organizational Vision	.0148	-2.78	.295	-3.01

Table 8: One-sample skewness and kurtosis tests – source: data analysis

3. Section Two: Importance of Strategic Management

Section two as in Table 9 gauges the importance of strategic management within the governmental organizations under scrutiny. The findings reported that around half of the respondents (49.63%) agreed (32.22%) or strongly agreed (17.41%) that in their organizations the top management, the middle management and lower-ranking staff see strategic management as

beneficial and critical to their organization's success. However, only 20% of the participants disagreed (12.22%) or strongly disagreed (7.78%) that this was the case.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %
1	Top management sees strategic planning as critical to an organization's success.	7.78	12.22	30.37	32.22	17.41
2	Middle management sees strategic planning as critical to an organization's success.	5.93	13.33	27.41	41.11	12.22
3	Lower-ranking staffs see strategic planning is beneficial.	5.19	19.63	25.56	35.19	14.44

Table 9: Importance of Strategic Management

4. Section Three: Strategic Plan Formulation

Section three explores how the public organizations in Bahrain formulated their strategic plans, as follows.

4.1 Part one: Developing a strategic vision involving public and staff input

Part one of section three first explores the findings about developing a clear vision, mission, and organizational values, and then explores the findings about the involvement of the internal and external stakeholders in the strategic planning process.

4.1.1 Developing vision, mission, and organizational values

As shown in Table 10, more than half the participants (54.44%) agreed (40.74%) or strongly agreed (13.70%) that their organizations had developed clear organizational vision, while 30% of all participants disagreed (21.11%) or strongly disagreed (8.52%) that their organizations had done so. The mean value for developing clear organizational vision is 3.30 and the

standard deviation is 1.19. The findings also reported that rather more than half the participants (59.26 %) agreed (43.33%) or strongly agreed (15.93%) that their organizations had developed a clear organizational mission statement. However, only 27% of the participants disagreed (21.11%) or strongly disagreed (5.56%) that this was correct. The mean value for developing a clear organizational mission is 3.43 and the standard deviation is 1.15.

The findings additionally reported that half of the participants (50%) agreed (36.33%) or strongly agreed (13.33%) that their organizations had developed clear organizational values, while only 26% of participants disagreed (19.26%) or strongly disagreed (6.67%) that this was so. The mean value for developing clear organizational values is 3.30 and the standard deviation is 1.13.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	We have developed a clear vision.	8.52	21.11	15.93	40.74	13.70	3.30	1.19
2	We have developed a clear mission statement.	5.56	21.11	14.07	43.33	15.93	3.43	1.15
3	We have developed clear organizational values.	6.67	19.26	24.44	36.30	13.33	3.30	1.13

Table 10: Developing vision, mission, and organizational values

4.1.2 Involvement of Internal and External Stakeholders

As reflected in Table 11, the findings reported, with the very low percentage of 23.33% that very few participants agreed (18.52%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that their organizations had involved lower level staff in the strategic planning formulation process. However, 60% of the participants disagreed (32.22%) or strongly disagreed (27.41%) that their organizations did so. The

mean value for lower-ranking staff' involvement is 2.41 and the standard deviation is 1.21.

Moreover, according to the findings, only 38.5% of all participants agreed (29.26%) or strongly agreed (9.26%) that their organizations had involved internal consultants in the strategic planning formulation process, while 33% of the participants disagreed (20%) or strongly disagreed (13%) that their organizations had done so. The mean value for the involvement of internal consultants is 3.02 and the standard deviation is 1.18.

The findings also reported a very low percentage (24.08%) of the participants who agreed (18.52%) or strongly agreed (5.56%) that their organizations had involved external consultants in the strategic planning formulation process, while 40% of the participants disagreed (21.85%) or strongly disagreed (18.15%) that their organizations had done this. The mean value for external consultants' involvement is 3.41 and the standard deviation is 1.14.

The findings additionally revealed the very low percentage of 16.29% of participants who agreed (12.59%) or strongly agreed (3.7%) that key external stakeholders were involved in developing the strategic plan of their organization, while 60.37% of participants disagreed (32.22%) or strongly disagreed (28.15%) that this was the case. The mean value for external stakeholders' involvement is 2.71 and the standard deviation is 1.13.

The findings at the same time revealed that half the participants (50%) agreed (30.37%) or strongly agreed (19.26%) that their organizations had developed proper partnership relations with private sector organizations and had encouraged their contribution during the strategic planning formulation process. Meanwhile, 21% of the participants disagreed (21.11%) or strongly

disagreed (6.3%) that their organizations had done so. The mean value for private sector involvement is 3.41 and the standard deviation is 1.14.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Lower-ranking staffs have been involved in strategic planning development.	27.41	32.22	17.04	18.52	4.81	2.41	1.21
2	The internal advisors have played a significant role in strategic planning development.	12.96	20.00	28.52	29.26	9.26	3.02	1.18
3	The external consultants have played a significant role in strategic planning development.	18.15	21.85	35.93	18.52	5.56	2.71	1.13
4	Key external stakeholders have been involved in developing our strategic plan.	28.15	32.22	23.33	12.59	3.70	2.31	1.12
5	Our organization welcomes private-sector involvement in strategic planning development.	6.30	14.81	29.26	30.37	19.26	3.41	1.14

Table 11: Involvement of Internal and External Stakeholders

4.2 Part two: Develop and prioritize strategic and operational objectives

As shown in Table 12, the findings revealed that only 44% of all participants agreed (34.81%) or strongly agreed (8.89%) that their organizations had developed clear strategic objectives, while 31.5% of all participants disagreed (25.2%) or strongly disagreed (6.3%) that they had. The mean value for developing clear strategic objectives is 3.15 and the standard deviation is 1.09.

The findings also reported that only 45% of all participants agreed (36.30%) or strongly agreed (8.89%) that their organizations had developed clear operational objectives, while 33.34% of all participants disagreed (27.04%) or strongly disagreed (6.3%) that their organizations had done this. The

mean value for developing clear operational objectives is 3.14 and the standard deviation is 1.12.

Regarding the performance indicators, only 42.22% of all participants agreed (34.81%) or strongly agreed (7.41%) that their organizations had developed clear performance indicators, while 32.22% of all participants disagreed (22.59%) or strongly disagreed (9.63%) that this was the case. The mean value for developing clear performance indicators is 3.07 and the standard deviation is 1.12. Moreover, a low percentage of 28.14% of all participants agreed (24.07%) or strongly agreed (4.07%) that their organizations had clearly prioritized their performance indicators, while 41.48% of all participants disagreed (30%) or strongly disagreed (11.48%) that their organizations had done this. The mean value for developing clear prioritized performance indicators is 2.79 and the standard deviation is 1.06.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	We have developed clear strategic objectives.	6.30	25.19	24.81	34.81	8.89	3.15	1.09
2	We have developed clear operational objectives.	6.30	27.04	21.48	36.30	8.89	3.14	1.12
3	We have developed clear performance indicators.	9.63	22.59	25.56	34.81	7.41	3.07	1.12
4	We have clearly prioritized our performance indicators.	11.48	30.00	30.37	24.07	4.07	2.79	1.06

Table 12: Developing and Prioritizing the Strategic and Operational Objectives

4.3 Part three: Develop departmental operational plans

Part three as shown in Table 13 explores the findings about developing departmental operational plans aligned with the strategic plan, as follows.

4.3.1 Structured Process for Strategic Planning Formulation

The findings revealed that 28.51% of the participants agreed (24.44%) or strongly agreed (4.07%) that their organizations had followed a structured process using a planning manual in the strategic planning formulation process. However, 38% of them disagreed (25.19%) or strongly disagreed (12.59%) that their organizations had done this. The mean value for the structured process in strategic planning formulation is 2.50 and the standard deviation is 1.14.

4.3.2 Developing Units' Operational Plans

The findings indicate that 41.12% of all participants agreed (35.56%) or strongly agreed (5.56%) that all units within their organizations had developed their own operational plans, while 30.37% of the participants disagreed (20.37%) or strongly disagreed (10%) that this had been the case. The mean value for developing the units' operational plans is 2.82 and the standard deviation is 1.07.

4.3.3 Fixed Budget by Top Management

The findings from the analysis suggest that 34.08% of all participants agreed (27.04%) or strongly agreed (7.04%) that top management in their organizations aligns a fixed financial budget to each operational objective, while 34.07% of the participants disagreed (20.74%) or strongly disagreed (13.33%) that this was so. The mean value for aligning a fixed budget by top management is 3.06 and the standard deviation is 1.09.

4.3.4 New Income Generation Plans

The findings reported that only 20% of all participants agreed (15.19%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that their organizations had developed new income generation plans in the strategic planning formulation process. However,

more than half the participants (52% disagreed (28.89%) or strongly disagreed (22.96%) that their organizations had done this. The mean value for developing new income generation plans is 2.94 and the standard deviation is 1.14.

4.3.5 The Financial Resources

The findings included the very low percentage of 27.74% of participants who agreed (22.93%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that their organizations had secured adequate financial resources for the strategic planning formulation process, while 35.15% of all participants disagreed (21.11%) or strongly disagreed (14.07%) that this could be said. The mean value for securing adequate financial resources is 2.83 and the standard deviation is 1.08.

4.3.6 Resource Allocation by Top Management

The findings illustrate that 29.62% of all participants agreed (24.81%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that top management in their organizations allocated the needed resources to fund new strategic initiatives, while 38.89% of the participants disagreed (25.19%) or strongly disagreed (13.7%) that they did. The mean value for resource allocation is 2.82 and the standard deviation is 1.10.

4.3.7 The Technological Resources

The findings revealed that only 37.04% of all participants agreed (31.48%) or strongly agreed (5.56%) that their organizations had provided adequate technological resources for the strategic planning formulation process. However, 33.7% of all participants disagreed (21.48%) or strongly disagreed (12.22%) that their organizations had provided this. The mean value for

providing adequate technological resources is 2.96 and the standard deviation is 1.12.

	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Developing new ways of raising income is a major part of our strategy.	22.96	28.89	28.15	15.19	4.81	2.50	1.14
2	Our strategic planning development procedures can be described as largely structured with reference to a planning manual.	12.59	25.19	33.70	24.44	4.07	2.82	1.07
3	All the units within our organization have developed their own operational plans.	10.00	20.37	28.52	35.56	5.56	3.06	1.09
4	Top management aligns a fixed financial budget to each operational objective.	13.33	20.74	31.85	27.04	7.04	2.94	1.14
5	We have adequate financial resources for strategic planning development.	14.07	21.11	37.04	22.96	4.81	2.83	1.08
6	Top management allocates the needed resources to fund new strategic initiatives.	13.70	25.19	31.48	24.81	4.81	2.82	1.10
7	We have adequate technological resources for strategic planning development.	12.22	21.48	29.26	31.48	5.56	2.96	1.12

Table 13: Developing Departmental Operational Plans Aligned with the Strategic Plan

Based on the above 19 series of variables related to the strategic planning development, rated from 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree, as shown in Tables 10, 11, 12, and 13, the cumulative average mean rating for the 19 related variables ranged from the high of 3.43 on the variable 'developing clear mission statement' to a low of 2.31 on the variable 'involvement of key external stakeholders'. There are also no differences between the 19 variables in terms of mean and standard deviation, except a very low difference for the mean of the variable 'clearly prioritizing performance indicators', new ways of raising income, and aligning fixed financial budget to each operational objective.

5. Section Four: Strategic Plan Implementation

The strategic planning implementation section assesses first the extent of internal and external communication, and next the strategic planning skills and knowledge development. Third, it explores the integration, support, incentives and organizational structure, and fourth, it examines proper strategic planning implementation, before finally evaluating the level of commitment to strategic planning implementation.

5.1 Internal and External Communications

The findings as shown in Table 14 revealed that only 28.5% of all participants agreed (25.19%) or strongly agreed (3.33%) that there was effective internal communication among all employees within their organizations, while around 46% of all participants disagreed (29.26%) or strongly disagreed (16.67%) that there was. The mean value for effective internal communication is 2.69 and the standard deviation is 1.12. The findings also reflected that only 20.74% of all participants agreed (19.26%) or strongly agreed (1.48%) that there was a proper relationship between the groups for strategic planning formulation and those for implementation within their organizations, while 47.04% of all participants disagreed (30%) or strongly disagreed (17.04%) that a proper relationship existed in their organizations. The mean value for cooperation between planning and implementation groups is 2.58 and the standard deviation is 1.03.

The findings moreover show that 36.67% of all participants agreed (31.48%) or strongly agreed (5.19%) that there was effective cooperation between all departments within their organizations, while 35% of all participants disagreed (20.37%) or strongly disagreed (14.44%) that there was. The

mean value for effective cooperation between departments is 2.93 and the standard deviation is 1.14. The findings additionally show that only 23.34% of all participants agreed (17.78%) or strongly agreed (5.56%) that top management internally cascaded the strategic plan all the way down the organization, while more than half the participants (55.56%) disagreed (28.89%) or strongly disagreed (26.67%) that they did. The mean value for internally cascading the strategic plan is 2.47 and the standard deviation is 1.22. The findings also reported that more of half of all participants (50.37%) agreed (40%) or strongly agreed (10.37%) that their organizations had a solid collaborative relationship with key external stakeholders, while 28.52% of the participants disagreed (18.52%) or strongly disagreed (10%) that their organizations had this. The mean value for cooperation with key stakeholders is 3.22 and the standard deviation is 1.16.

In terms of external communications, the findings indicate that 38.52% of all participants agreed (31.48%) or strongly agreed (7.04%) that there was effective external communication between their organizations and the public, while 30.37% of all participants disagreed (17.78%) or strongly disagreed (12.59%) that this was the case. The mean value for effective external communication with the public is 3.06 and the standard deviation is 1.23.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	We have effective internal communication among all employees.	16.67	29.26	25.56	25.19	3.33	2.69	1.12
2	There is a proper relationship between the groups for formulation and those for implementation.	17.04	30.00	32.22	19.26	1.48	2.58	1.03
3	There is effective internal communication and collaboration between most departments.	14.44	20.37	28.52	31.48	5.19	2.93	1.14
4	Top management internally cascades the strategic plan all the way down the organization.	26.67	28.89	21.11	17.78	5.56	2.47	1.22
5	We have a solid collaborative relationship with key external stakeholders.	10.00	18.52	21.11	40.00	10.37	3.22	1.16
6	We have effective communication with the public.	12.59	17.78	31.11	31.48	7.04	3.06	1.23

Table 14: Internal and External Communications

5.2 Strategic Management Skills and Knowledge Development

The findings of strategic management skills and knowledge development are reflected in Table 15 as follows.

The findings report shows that only 18.89% of all participants agreed (17.41%) or strongly agreed (1.48%) that their organizations offered adequate strategic management training for employees in order to implement the plans effectively. However, as shown in Table 16, 50% of all participants disagreed (30%) or strongly disagreed (20.37%) that their organizations offered this. The mean value for providing adequate strategic management training is 2.49 and the standard deviation is 1.05. The findings also revealed that only 26.66% of all participants agreed (24.44%) or strongly agreed (2.22%) that middle management employees of their

organizations had proper strategic planning skills that could effectively aid strategic plan implementation. But, as shown in Table 16, nearly half the participants (48.15%) disagreed (30.74%) or strongly disagreed (17.41%) that their middle management possessed these. The mean value for proper middle management skills is 2.63 and the standard deviation is 1.10. Moreover, the findings reported a very low percentage (15.92%) of the participants who agreed (14.81%) or strongly agreed (1.11%) that the lower level staff in their organizations had proper strategic management knowledge that would help them implement the strategic plan. However, as shown in Table 16, more than half of all participants disagreed (37.78%) or strongly disagreed (16.30%) that this was true. The mean value for proper knowledge of strategic management among lower-ranking staff is 2.47 and the standard deviation is 0.97.

The findings additionally report that only 21.48% of all participants agreed (20%) or strongly agreed (1.48%) that the lower-ranking staff level within their organizations had clear duties that helped them effectively in strategic plan implementation. While, as shown in Table 16, more than half of the participants (57%) disagreed (36.3%) or strongly disagreed (20.37%) that the lower-ranking staff level within their organizations had clear duties that helped them effectively in strategic plan implementation. The mean value for a clear lower-ranking staff duty is 2.53 and the standard deviation is 1.35.

With a low percentage, the findings reported that only 24.41% of all participants agreed (20.37%) or strongly agreed (4.04%) that the employees within their organizations understood the strategic planning process before its implementation. However, 44.45% of all participants disagreed (28.52%)

or strongly disagreed (15.93%) that they did. The mean value for understanding the strategic management process before implementation is 2.68 and the standard deviation is 1.09.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	There is enough training for employees.	20.37	30.00	30.74	17.41	1.48	2.49	1.05
2	Middle managers have the right knowledge and skills for strategic management.	17.41	30.74	25.19	24.44	2.22	2.63	1.10
3	Lower level employees are familiar with strategic management.	16.30	37.78	30.00	14.81	1.11	2.47	0.97
4	The duties, tasks and responsibilities are properly explained to the lower-ranking staff.	20.37	36.30	21.85	20.00	1.48	2.53	1.35
5	Our strategic plan is well understood before any significant actions are taken.	15.93	20.52	31.11	20.37	4.07	2.68	1.09

Table 15: Strategic Management Skills and Knowledge Development

5.3 Integration, Support, incentives and Organizational Structure

Table 16 below reports the findings on integration, support, incentives and organizational structure, as follows.

The findings reveal that 34.08% of all participants agreed (27.41%) or strongly agreed (6.67%) that the top management of their organizations ensured the best possible integration of processes, structures, resources and people. However, around 43% of all participants disagreed (28.89%) or strongly disagreed (13.7%) that this was the case. The mean value for ensuring integration is 2.84 and the standard deviation is 1.17.

The findings also indicate that only 30.40% of all participants agreed (25.19%) or strongly agreed (5.19%) that the vision of their organization was

properly aligned with lower-ranking staff' operations, while 44.5% of all participants disagreed (28.52%) or strongly disagreed (15.93%) that it was. The mean value for aligning vision with lower-ranking staff' operation is 2.75 and the standard deviation is 1.15. Moreover, the findings reported that 29.63% of all participants agreed (27.41%) or strongly agreed (2.22%) that the decision making process at all organizational levels is linked with the strategic plan, while around 38% disagreed (26.30%) or strongly disagreed (11.85%) that this occurred. The mean value for the link of the decision making with the strategic plan is 2.82 and the standard deviation is 1.03.

Additionally the findings show that only 24.82% of all participants agreed (19.63%) or strongly agreed (5.19%) that the top management of their organizations were providing the needed support to employees during the strategic planning implementation, while 41% of all participants disagreed (28.15%) or strongly disagreed (12.59%) that the top management was doing so. The mean value for top management support is 2.77 and the standard deviation is 1.07.

The findings also reported that 34.44% of all participants agreed (30.37%) or strongly agreed (4.07%) that the middle management within their organizations was providing the required support to employees during the strategic planning implementation stage. But, as shown in Table 17, 33% of all participants disagreed (24.44%) or strongly disagreed (8.89%) that this was happening. The mean value for middle management support is 2.96 and the standard deviation is 1.03.

Regarding the rewards systems, the findings reported that 33.34% of all participants agreed (17.04%) or strongly agreed (16.3%) that their organizations had adequate reward systems that encouraged success and

gave incentives for strategic planning implementation. However, 44% of all participants disagreed (20.37%) or strongly disagreed (23.33%) that this was so. The mean value for ensuring adequate reward systems is 2.97 and the standard deviation is 1.29. In terms of the organizational structure, the findings indicate that only 21.11% of all participants agreed (17.41%) or strongly agreed (3.70%) that their organizations had proper organizational structure that would aid strategic planning implementation. More than half of the participants (55%) disagreed (31.85%) or strongly disagreed (22.96%) that their organizations had this. The mean value for ensuring adequate organizational structure is 2.47 and the standard deviation is 1.13.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Top management ensures the best possible integration of processes, structures, resources and people.	7.76	22.59	28.52	32.22	8.89	2.84	1.17
2	Our vision is aligned with lower-ranking staff operations.	15.93	28.52	25.19	25.19	5.19	2.75	1.15
3	There is a link between strategic planning and the decision-making process.	11.85	26.30	32.22	27.41	2.22	2.82	1.03
4	Top management supports us in the implementation of the strategic plan.	12.59	28.15	34.44	19.63	5.19	2.77	1.07
5	Middle management supports us in the implementation of the strategic plan.	8.89	24.44	32.22	30.37	4.07	2.96	1.03
6	The reward systems encourage success.	20.37	23.33	22.96	17.04	16.30	2.97	1.29
7	We have proper organizational structure that aids strategic implementation.	22.96	31.85	24.07	17.41	3.70	2.47	1.13

Table 16: Integration, Support, Incentives and Organizational Structure

5.4 Proper Strategic Plan Implementation

The findings of proper strategic plan implementation are shown below in

Table 17, as follows.

The findings reveal that only 20% of all participants agreed (18.15%) or strongly agreed (1.85%) that their organizational strategic objectives were implemented properly, while 40% of all participants disagreed (29.26%) or strongly disagreed (10.74%) that they were. The mean value for the proper implementation of strategic objectives is 2.71 and the standard deviation is 0.95. The findings also reflect that only 26.29% of all participants agreed (24.81%) or strongly agreed (1.48%) that their organizational operational objectives had been implemented properly, while 36% of all participants disagreed (26.67%) or strongly disagreed (9.63%) that this had occurred. The mean value for proper implementation of operational objectives is 2.82 and the standard deviation is 0.96. The findings moreover indicate that only 25.55% of all participants agreed (20.74%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that their organizations had enough staff for strategic plan implementation, while more than half the participants (51%) disagreed (30.74%) or strongly disagreed (20.37%) that this was true. The mean value for ensuring enough staff for strategic plan implementation is 2.59 and the standard deviation is 1.17. The findings additionally show that 24.44% of all participants agreed (20.37%) or strongly agreed (4.07%) that there was no competition between activities within their organizations, while 34.07% disagreed (23.33%) or strongly disagreed (10.74%) that there was none. The mean value for competition between activities is 2.84 and the standard deviation is 1.00.

Regarding the time given for strategic plan implementation, the findings suggest that 23.7% of all participants agreed (19.26%) or strongly agreed (4.44%) that there is enough time for strategic plan implementation within their organizations, while 41.85% of participants disagreed (28.52%) or strongly disagreed (13.33%) that there was. The mean value for enough

time given for implementation is 2.73 and the standard deviation is 1.06. In terms of the control over strategic plan implementation, the findings show that only 18.52% of all participants agreed (17.41%) or strongly agreed (1.11%) that there was proper control within their organizations over the strategic plan implementation stage, while 51.85% of participants disagreed (34.44%) or strongly disagreed (17.41%) that there was. The mean value for control over implementation is 2.50 and the standard deviation is 1.01.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Strategic objectives are implemented properly.	10.74	29.26	40.00	18.15	1.85	2.71	0.95
2	Operational objectives are implemented properly.	9.63	26.67	37.41	24.81	1.48	2.82	0.96
3	We have enough staff for strategic planning implementation.	20.37	30.74	23.33	20.74	4.81	2.59	1.17
4	There is no competition between activities.	10.74	23.33	41.48	20.37	4.07	2.84	1.00
5	There is enough time for strategy implementation.	13.33	28.52	24.44	19.26	4.44	2.73	1.06
6	We have proper control over the implementation stage.	17.41	34.44	29.63	17.41	1.11	2.50	1.01

Table 17: Proper Strategic Plan Implementation

5.5 Commitment to Implementation

Table 18 below reveals the findings about commitment to strategic planning implementation, as follows.

In regards to Lower-ranking staff's Commitment to Implementing Objectives, the findings show that only 29.63% of all participants agreed (25.56%) or strongly agreed (4.07%) that the lower-ranking staff within their organization were committed to implementing the organizational objectives, while 38.5% of all participants disagreed (27.41%) or strongly disagreed (11.11%) that

the lower-ranking staff within their organization were thus committed. The mean value for lower-ranking staff commitment to implement objectives is 2.84 and the standard deviation is 1.06. Moreover, the findings revealed that only 28.89% of all participants agreed (23.33%) or strongly agreed (5.56%) that lower level staff within their organizations were committed to the organizational vision during the strategic planning implementation. But, as shown in Table 19, 34% of all participants disagreed (26.67%) or strongly disagreed (7.41%) that lower level staff were committed to this. The mean value for lower-ranking staff commitment to vision is 3.00 and the standard deviation is 1.54.

Regarding the middle management commitment to the organizational vision, the findings revealed that 37.78% of all participants agreed (32.59%) or strongly agreed (5.19%) that the middle management within their organizations was committed to the organizational vision during the strategic planning implementation. As shown in Table 19, however, 28% of all participants disagreed (20.37%) or strongly disagreed (7.78%) that this was the case. The mean value for middle management commitment to vision is 3.07 and the standard deviation is 1.02.

In terms of the top Management Commitment to the organizational vision, the findings suggest that 41.11% of all participants agreed (32.22%) or strongly agreed (8.89%) that the top management of their organizations was committed to the organizational vision during strategic planning implementation. But, as shown in Table 19, 30% of all participants disagreed (22.59%) or strongly disagreed (7.78%) that they were. The mean value for top management commitment to vision is 3.12 and the standard deviation is 1.10. The findings also revealed that 40.37% of all participants agreed

(31.85%) or strongly agreed (8.52%) that the top management of their organizations was committed to managing for results, while 30.37% disagreed (19.63%) or strongly disagreed (10.74%) that it was. The mean value for results oriented top management is 3.08 and the standard deviation is 1.13.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The lower-ranking staffs are committed to attaining our organizational objectives.	11.11	27.41	31.85	25.56	4.07	2.84	1.06
2	The lower level staffs are committed to attaining our organizational vision.	7.41	26.67	37.04	23.33	5.56	3.00	1.54
3	Middle management is committed to the implementation of our vision.	7.78	20.37	34.07	32.59	5.19	3.07	1.02
4	Top management is committed to the implementation of our vision.	13.70	28.89	23.33	27.41	6.67	3.12	1.10
5	Top management is committed to managing for results.	10.74	19.63	29.26	31.85	8.52	3.08	1.13

Table 18: Commitment to Implementation

In the above series of 29 findings, the variables related to the development of departmental operational plans and implementation were rated from 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree, and, as shown in Tables 13, 15, 16, 17, and 18, the cumulative average mean rating for these 29 related variables ranged from the high of 3.12 on the variable 'solid cooperation with key external stakeholders' to a low of 2.46 on the variable 'lower-ranking staff knowledge of strategic planning: also there are no differences between the 29 variables in terms of mean and standard deviation, except a low difference from the mean for the variables 'solid collaborative relationship with key external stakeholders', and 'internally cascading the strategic plan.

6. Section Five: Strategic Plan Evaluation

This fifth section is about the Strategic Plan Evaluation. This part explores the performance management process, evaluation, reporting, and services improvement, as shown in Table 19, as follows.

6.1 Performance Management Process

In terms of linking strategic planning with performance management, the findings reveal that only 20% of all participants agreed (16.67%) or strongly agreed (3.33%) that the strategic planning process in their organization was closely linked with the performance management processes at all organizational levels, while 44.08% of the participants disagreed (27.78%) or strongly disagreed (16.3%) that this was so. The mean value for linking strategic planning with performance management is 2.63 and the standard deviation is 1.05. With regard to reviewing performance data, the analysis findings suggest that 25.19% of all participants agreed (20%) or strongly agreed (5.19%) that top management reviewed performance data on a regular basis for making decisions and taking corrective action to improve the organization's performance, while 40.74% of participants disagreed (23.33%) or strongly disagreed (17.41%) that it did so. The mean value for reviewing performance data is 2.72 and the standard deviation is 1.12. Moreover, the findings revealed that 25.07% of all participants agreed (21.74%) or strongly agreed (3.33%) that top management monitored performance measures to ensure the proper implementation of the strategic plan, while 46.3% of participants disagreed (27.78%) or strongly disagreed (18.52%) that it did. The mean value for monitoring organizational performance by top management is 2.63 and the standard deviation is 1.11.

Additionally, and in terms of monitoring external and internal trends by top management, the findings asserted that 24.47% of all participants agreed (21.11%) or strongly disagreed (3.36%) that top management monitored external and internal trends continuously and revised strategy if needed, while 44.08% of participants disagreed (25.93%) or strongly disagreed (18.15%) that this was the case. The mean value for monitoring external and internal trends by top management is 2.66 and the standard deviation is 1.10.

The analysis findings also confirmed that 24.08% of all participants agreed (18.15%) or strongly agreed (5.93%) that top management in their organizations linked the implementation of organizational objectives with individual performance appraisals, while 46.67% of participants disagreed (25.93%) or strongly disagreed (20.74%) that top management did so. The mean value for linking implementation with the individual's performance is 2.63 and the standard deviation is 1.17. In regard to sharing organizational performance with public, the analysis findings illustrate that only 15.55% of all participants agreed (10.74%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that their organization was communicating its performance information to a wide range of external stakeholders on a regular basis, while more than half of the participants (59.26% disagreed (27.78%) or strongly disagreed (31.48%) that this was the case. The mean value for sharing organizational performance with the public is 2.30 and the standard deviation is 1.16.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Our strategic planning process is closely linked with the performance management processes at all organizational levels.	16.30	27.78	35.93	16.67	3.33	2.63	1.05
2	Top management reviews performance data on a regular basis for making decisions and taking corrective action to improve the organizational performance.	17.41	23.33	34.07	20.00	5.19	2.72	1.12
3	Top management monitors performance measures to ensure the proper implementation of strategic plan.	18.52	27.78	29.63	20.74	3.33	2.63	1.11
4	Top management monitors external trends and internal performance continuously and revises strategy if needed.	18.15	25.93	31.48	21.11	3.33	2.66	1.10
5	Top management links the implementation of organizational objectives with individual performance appraisals.	20.74	25.93	29.26	18.15	5.93	2.63	1.17
6	Our organization is communicating its performance information to a wide range of external stakeholders on a regular basis.	31.48	27.78	25.19	10.74	4.81	2.30	1.16

Table 19: Performance Management Process

6.2 Evaluation, Reporting and Services Improvement

Table 20 summarizes the findings on strategic planning evaluation, reporting performance, and services improvement, as follows.

The findings report that only 18.15% of all participants agreed (15.56%) or strongly agreed (2.59%) that there was a proper strategic planning evaluation at regular intervals within their organizations, while nearly half the participants (48.89% disagreed (30.37%) or strongly disagreed (18.52%) that there was. The mean value for frequent strategic planning evaluation is 2.53 and the standard deviation is 1.04. The findings also show that 28.51% of all participants agreed (23.7%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that the evaluation of lower level staff was based largely on their contribution to the

successful accomplishment of the strategic plan. However, as shown in Table 22, 39.26% of all participants disagreed (27.04%) or strongly disagreed (12.22%) that this was indeed the basis for their evaluation. The mean value for lower-ranking staff evaluation is 2.82 and the standard deviation is 1.08. In terms of middle management evaluation, the findings indicate that 28.52% of all participants agreed (25.19%) or strongly agreed (3.33%) that the evaluation of middle managers was based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan. As shown in Table 22, however, 38.15% of all participants disagreed (28.15%) or strongly disagreed (10%) that this occurs. The mean value for middle management evaluation is 2.84 and the standard deviation is 1.02.

Regarding the reporting system, the findings reported that 27.78 % of all participants agreed (21.85%) or strongly agreed (5.93%) that their organizations had a solid reporting system using adequate technology, while nearly half the participants (49%) disagreed (27.78%) or strongly disagreed (21.11%) that they had. The mean value for ensuring a solid reporting system is 2.64 and the standard deviation is 1.20.

In terms of improved services, the findings indicate that more than half of all participants (57.78%) agreed (38.52%) or strongly agreed (19.26%) that improving the current services at their organizations is a major part of their strategic plan, while only 21% of all participants disagreed (13.7%) or strongly disagreed (7.04%) that this was so. The mean value for improving current services is 3.49 and the standard deviation is 1.16.

No	Variable	Strongly disagreed %	Disagreed %	Neutral %	Agreed %	Strongly agreed %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	We have proper strategic planning evaluation at regular intervals.	18.52	30.37	32.96	15.56	2.59	2.53	1.04
2	The evaluation of lower-ranking staff is based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan.	12.22	27.04	32.22	23.70	4.81	2.82	1.08
3	The evaluation of middle managers is based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan.	10.00	28.15	33.33	25.19	3.33	2.84	1.02
4	We have a solid reporting system using adequate technology.	21.11	27.78	23.33	21.85	5.93	2.64	1.20
5	Improving our current services is a major part of our approach.	13.70	21.48	38.52	19.26	7.04	3.49	1.16

Table 20: Evaluation, Reporting and Services Improvement

The aboveseries of 11 of variables related to measuring and reporting results were rated from 1= 'Strongly disagree' to 5= 'Strongly agree', and as shown in Tables 17and 18, the cumulative average mean rating for the 11 related variables ranged from the high of 3.49 on the variable 'improving current services' to a low of 2.30 on the variable 'sharing organizational performance with external stakeholders. Moreover, there are no differences between all 11 variables in terms of mean and standard deviation, except for the mean for the variables 'improving current services' and 'internally cascading strategic plan'.

To sum up, based on the above findings of the strategic plan formulation, it should be reported that the average level of proper strategic planning

development within the organizations under scrutiny is 36.71%, as shown in below in Table 21.

No	Factor	Applying Level (%)
1	Developing Clear Organizational Vision	54.44%
2	Developing Clear Organizational Mission	59.26%
3	Developing Clear Organizational Values	50%
4	Lower-ranking staff Involvement	28.14%
5	Internal Consultants' Involvement	23.33%
6	External Consultants' Involvement	38.50%
7	External Stakeholder Involvement	16.29%
8	Private Sector Involvement	50%
9	Developing Clear Strategic Objectives	44%
10	Developing Clear Operational Objectives	45%
11	Developing Clear Performance Indicators	42.22%
12	Prioritizing Performance Indicators	28.14%
13	Structured Process Formulation	28.51%
14	Developing Units' Operational Plans	41.12%
15	Aligning Fixed Budget to Operational Objectives	34.08%
16	Developing New Income Generation Plans	20%
17	Securing Financial Resources	27.74%
18	Allocating needed Resources	29.62%
19	Providing Adequate Technology	37.04%
	Average	36.71%

Table 21: Proper Strategic Plan Formulation

Moreover, based on the above findings of the strategic plan implementation part, it should be noted that the average level of proper strategic planning implementation within the organizations under scrutiny is 28.38 %, as shown in below in Table 22.

No	Factor	Applying Level (%)	No	Factor	Applying Level (%)
1	Internal Communication	28.50%	16	Middle Management Support	27.74%
2	Cooperation between Groups	20.74%	17	Rewards Systems	33.34%
3	Cooperation between Departments	36.67%	18	Organizational Structure	21.11%
4	Internally Cascading Strategic Plan	23.34%	19	Strategic Objectives Implementation	20%
5	Cooperation with Key Stakeholders	50.37%	20	Operational Objectives Implementation	26.29%
6	External Communication with Public	38.52%	21	Enough Staff for Implementation	25.55%
7	Adequate Strategic Planning Training	18.89%	22	Competition between Activities	24.44%
8	Middle Management Skills	26.66%	23	Time given for Implementation	23.70%
9	Lower-ranking staff Knowledge	15.92%	24	Control over Implementation	18.52%
10	Lower-ranking staff's Duties	21.48%	25	Lower-ranking staff's Commitment to Objectives	29.63%
11	Understanding Strategic Planning	24.41%	26	Lower-ranking staff Commitment to Vision	28.89%
12	Integration	34.08%	27	Middle Management Commitment to Vision	37.78%
13	Vision Alignment	30.40%	28	Top Management Commitment to Vision	41.11%
14	Decision Making Linkage	29.63%	29	Results Oriented Top Management	40.37%
15	Top Management Support	24.82%			
	Average				28.38%

Table 22: Proper Strategic plan Implementation

Additionally, the above findings of the strategic plan evaluation part reported that the average level of proper strategic planning evaluation within the organizations under scrutiny is 26.83%, as shown below in Table 23.

No	Factor	Applying Level (%)
1	Linking Strategic Planning with Performance Management	20%
2	Reviewing Performance Data	25.19%
3	Monitoring Organizational Performance	25.07%
4	Monitoring External and Internal Trends	24.47%
5	Linking Implementation with Individuals' Performance	24.08%
6	Sharing Organizational Performance with the Public	15.55%
7	Frequent Strategic Planning Evaluation	18.15%
8	Lower Level Staff Evaluation	28.51%
9	Middle Management Evaluation	28.52%
10	Solid Reporting System	27.78%
11	Current Services Improvement	57.78%
	Average	26.83%

Table 23: Proper Strategic Plan Evaluation

7. Section Six: Satisfaction with the Strategic Management Process

As shown in Table 24, the level of satisfaction with the formulation, implementation, and outcomes of the strategic management process within the organizations under scrutiny, is as follows.

The findings revealed that only 25.18% of all participants agreed (21.48%) or strongly agreed (3.7%) that they were satisfied with the implementation of the strategic objectives in their organizations, while nearly half the participants (49.26%) disagreed (32.22%) or strongly disagreed (17.04%) that they were satisfied with this. The mean value for satisfaction with strategic objectives implementation is 2.63 and the standard deviation is 1.11. Moreover, the findings revealed that only 28.52% of all participants agreed (25.19%) or strongly agreed (3.33%) that they were satisfied with the

implementation of the operational objectives of their organizations, while 49.26% of participants disagreed (29.26%) or strongly disagreed (15.56%) that they were satisfied with it. The mean value for satisfaction with the operational objectives' implementation is 2.71 and the standard deviation is 1.11.

In terms of satisfaction with the organizational final outcomes, the findings report that 30.37% of all participants agreed (25.93%) or strongly agreed (4.44%) that they were satisfied with the organizational final outcomes, while 34.81% of participants disagreed (22.22%) or strongly disagreed (12.59%) that they were satisfied with them. The mean value for satisfaction with the organizational final outcomes is 2.87 and the standard deviation is 1.07.

Regarding the satisfaction with the quality of services, the findings suggest that 42.6% of all participants agreed (36.3%) or strongly agreed (6.3%) that they were satisfied with the quality of the services provided by their organizations, while 28.89% of participants disagreed (17.41%) or strongly disagreed (11.48%) that they were satisfied with it. The mean value for satisfaction with services quality is 3.09 and the standard deviation is 1.12.

As regards the satisfaction with organizational improvement, the findings illustrate that 30% of all participants agreed (25.56%) or strongly agreed (4.44%) that they were satisfied with their organization's overall improvement, while 38.88% of participants disagreed (24.81%) or strongly disagreed (14.07%) that they were satisfied with it. The mean value for satisfaction with the overall organizational improvement is 2.81 and the standard deviation is 1.10. Finally, in terms of the overall satisfaction with the strategic planning process, the findings revealed that 28.07% of all participants agreed (24.07%) or strongly agreed (4.07%) that they were

satisfied with the strategic planning process of their organizations, while nearly half of the participants (48.89%) disagreed (30.74%) or strongly disagreed (18.15%) that they were satisfied with it. The mean value for satisfaction with the strategic management process is 2.65 and the standard deviation is 1.15

No	Variable	Strongly disagreed %	Disagreed %	Neutral %	Agreed %	Strongly agreed %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I am satisfied with Strategic Objectives Implementation	17.04	32.22	25.56	21.48	3.70	2.63	1.11
2	I am satisfied with Operational Objectives Implementation	15.56	29.26	26.67	25.19	3.33	2.71	1.11
3	I am satisfied with Organizational Outcomes	12.59	22.22	34.81	25.93	4.44	2.87	1.07
4	I am satisfied with Services Quality	11.48	17.41	28.52	36.30	6.30	3.09	1.12
5	I am satisfied with Organizational Improvement	14.07	24.81	31.11	25.56	4.44	2.81	1.10
6	I am satisfied with Strategic Planning Process	18.15	30.74	22.96	24.07	4.07	2.65	1.15

Table 24: Satisfaction with Strategic Formulation, Implementation and Outcomes

The above series of 6 variables related to the level of satisfaction with the planning, implementation and outcomes of the strategic planning process were rated from 1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree, and, the cumulative average mean rating for the 6 related variables ranged from the high of 3.09 on the variable 'satisfaction with service quality' to a low of 2.63 on the variable 'satisfaction with the implementation of the strategic objectives. In addition, there are no differences between all 6 variables in terms of mean and standard deviation.

Based also on the above, the findings revealed, as shown in Table 25, that only 30% of all participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were

satisfied with the planning, implementation, outcomes and the strategic planning process of their organizations.

No	Factor	Satisfaction Average (%)
1	Satisfaction with Strategic Objectives Implementation	25.18%
2	Satisfaction with Operational Objectives Implementation	28.52%
3	Satisfaction with Organizational Outcomes	30.37%
4	Satisfaction with Services Quality	42.60%
5	Satisfaction with Organizational Improvement	30%
6	Satisfaction with Strategic Mangement Process	24.07%
	Overall Satisfaction with Formulation, Implementation and Outcomes	30%

Table 25: Overall Satisfaction with Formulation, Implementation and Outcomes

8. Section Seven: Strong and Inspiring Leadership

This part explores the six leadership elements needed to shift from traditional strategic planning to a strategic management approach by focusing on the most appropriate objectives and to manage effectively to achieve these objectives. It is worth noting that these leadership elements need not be interpreted as the most fundamental requirements of effective leadership, but rather should be viewed a leading edge elements which help in the successful implementation of organizational strategic and operational objectives, and in turn help governmental organizations to make the transition from strategic planning to a strategic management approach. The findings concerning six elements are reported as shown in Table 26 below.

8.1Top Managers as Role Models

The findings revealed that 36.67% of all participants agreed (26.3%) or strongly agreed (10.37%) that they consider the top managers of their organizations to be role models of strong and inspiring leadership, while

44% of all participants disagreed (25.93%) or strongly disagreed (18.15%) that they could be considered in this way. The mean value for role model leadership is 2.85 and the standard deviation is 1.28.

8.2 Top Management Decisions

The findings reveal that only 26.66% of all participants agreed (21.85%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that the top management of their organizations used strategic planning to drive their decision-making process, while 36.29% of participants disagreed (24.81%) or strongly disagreed (11.48%) that it did. The mean value for top management decisions is 2.84 and the standard deviation is 1.05.

8.3 Top Management Performance's Evaluation

The findings suggest that 28.88% of all participants agreed (24.07%) or strongly agreed (4.81%) that the top management in their organization had no problem in reporting on its own performance, while 38.52% of the participants disagreed (20.74%) or strongly disagreed (17.78%) that this was so. The mean value for top management's performance evaluation is 2.77 and the standard deviation is 1.14.

8.4 Modifying Organizational Structure by Top Management

The findings indicate that 30.37% of all participants agreed (24.81%) or strongly disagreed (5.56%) that the top management in their organization had made some changes in organizational structure to support the strategic planning implementation, while 41.86% of participants disagreed (26.3%) or strongly disagreed (15.56%) that top management had done this. The mean value for modifying organizational structure by top management is 2.79 and the standard deviation is 1.15.

8.5 Modifying HRM Regulations by Top Management

The findings reveal that 32.97% of all participants agreed (25.19%) or strongly agreed (7.78%) that the top management in their organization had made some changes in human resource regulations to support the strategic planning implementation, while 41.12% of participants disagreed (25.93%) or strongly disagreed (15.19%) that top management had done so. The mean value for modifying human resources regulations by top management is 2.84 and the standard deviation is 1.19.

8.6 Modifying Organizational Culture by Top Management

The findings imply that 28.89% of all participants agreed (22.59%) or strongly agreed (6.3%) that the top management in their organization had tried to modify organizational culture to make it more compatible with the strategic plan, while 40% of participants disagreed (24.44%) or strongly disagreed (15.56%) that this had been done. The mean value for modifying organizational culture by top management is 2.80 and the standard deviation is 1.14.

No	Variable	Strongly disagreed %	Disagreed %	Neutral %	Agreed %	Strongly agreed %	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Top managers set good role models of strong and inspired leadership.	18.15	25.93	19.26	26.30	10.37	2.85	1.28
2	Top management uses strategic planning to drive the decision-making process.	11.48	24.81	37.04	21.85	4.81	2.84	1.05
3	Top management has no problem in reporting on its performance.	17.78	20.74	32.59	24.07	4.81	2.77	1.14
4	Top management has made some changes in organizational structure to support the strategic plan.	15.56	26.30	27.78	24.81	5.56	2.79	1.15
5	Top management has made some changes in human resource practices to support the strategic plan.	15.19	25.93	25.93	25.19	7.78	2.84	1.19
6	Top management has tried to modify the organizational culture to make it more compatible with the strategic plan.	15.56	24.44	31.11	22.59	6.30	2.80	1.14

Table 26: Leadership Elements needed for shifting to Strategic Management

The aboveseries of 6 variables related to leadership elements were rated from 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree, and, the cumulative average mean rating for the 6 related variables ranged from the high of 2.85 on the variable 'role model leadership' to a low of 2.77 on the variable 'reporting top management performance'. There are no differences between all 6 variables in terms of mean and standard deviation. Based on the above findings, the average level of the six leadership elementsexplored is 31%, as shown in Figure 6.

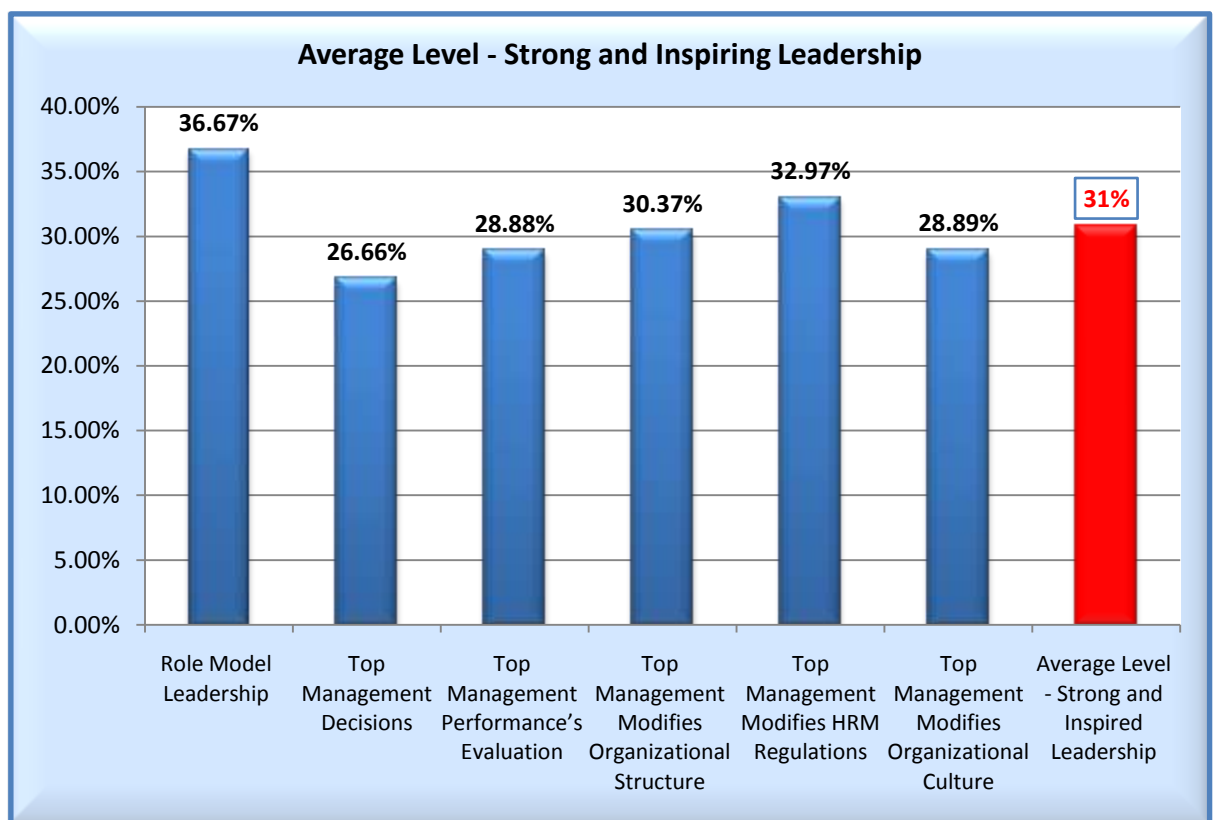


Figure 6: Level – Strong and Inspiring leadership

9. Section Eight: Transition to Strategic Management

The organizational transitioning from a traditional strategic planning process to the process of strategic management, according to Poister (2010), is producing more meaningful strategy in the future: it will allow the implementing strategies to be more effective, through managing the overall strategic agenda on a steady and not sporadic basis. This transition is helping to achieve long-term growth, profitability and sustainable competitive advantage (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Poister 2010; Poister et al 2013). Moreover, the transition to a strategic management approach ensures that organizations have proper organizational structure (Rhys et al. 2012), appropriate processes and the culture needed for the desired change, and achieve high returns (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Wronka and Wronka 2016).

In today's increasingly challenging environment, shifting to a strategic management approach is considered the most critical and fundamental process by which public sector organizations may achieve their desired outcomes (Plant 2009; Poister 2010). However, very few governmental organizations have developed a fully-fledged strategic management process that seriously integrates all the management processes and major functions for advancing the strategic agenda (Poister 2010). The transition to strategic management according to the literature requires skilled and powerful leadership to ensure a proper fit between the organization and its environment, to involve different stakeholders in creating the vision, to ensure internal and external commitment to the vision, mission, and strategic objectives, to encourage effective internal and external communication, to ensure proper decision-making processes, to properly allocate resources, to assign implementation responsibilities for strategic initiatives, to identify valid

performance measures and to ensure proper links between the organizational structure and its strategy (Plant 2009: Poister 2010). Hence, moving from traditional strategic planning to effective strategic management according to the literature needs an intensive, collective, and continuous involvement of top management. If public sector organizations want a more meaningful strategy in the future, the literature states that they have to effectively plan, implement, and evaluate their strategic management process, thus, public sector organizations will be more citizen-focused, decentralized, collaborative and results-oriented (Plant 2009: Poister 2010).

Based on the above, since the transition from strategic planning to the approach of strategic management is essential for governmental organizations if they are to focus on the most appropriate operational and strategic objectives, and to manage effectively to achieve these objectives (Ofori and Atiogbe 2012; Poister 2010; Poister et al 2013), this part will explore and assess in more detail the strength of the relationship of the proper implementation of strategic and operational objectives to other important strategic planning variables that help to achieve those objectives properly. It is hoped thus to reveal which variables are closely correlated to the transition from strategic planning to strategic management. These leading edge variables will help governmental organizations in Bahrain to put their main effort into shifting from strategic planning to the strategic management approach.

In the present research, using the correlation coefficient will, according to Saunders et al. (2009), help to quantify the strength of the linear relationship between two ranked or numerical variables, since it can take on any value between -1 and +1 and represent weaker positive and negative correlations,

as shown in Tabel 27. A value of +1 according to Saunders et al. represents a perfect positive correlation (the two variables are precisely related, sincethe values of one variable increase, the values of the other variable will increase) while a value of -1 represents a perfect negative correlation (the two variables are precisely related, in that the values of one variable increase as those of the other decrease). Saunders et al. (2009) moreover report that values of 0 means that the variables are perfectly independent, and in their view business research provides very few examples of perfect correlations.

-1	- 0.7	- 0.3	0	0.3	0.7	1
Perfect negative	Strong negative	Weak negative	Perfect independence	Weak positive	Strong positive	Perfect positive

Table 27: Values of the correlation coefficient – Source: Saunders et al. 2009

The following explored variables are the strategic plan formulation, internal and external stakeholders' involvement, internal and external communication and cooperation, theimplementation of strategic planning, commitment, development of skills and knowledge, performance management and evaluation, inspiring and strong leadership, and satisfaction with the strategic planning process.

9.1 Strategic Plan Formulation

The findings of strategic plan formulation as shown in Table 28 reported that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'developing clear vision' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.478) and operational (.487) objectives. The findings also reported that

there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between 'developing a clear mission statement', as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.462) and operational (.479) objectives. The findings additionally reported that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the variable developing clear organizational values and the proper implementation of both strategic (.382) and operational (.349) objectives. Moreover, the findings reported that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the developing clear strategic objectives variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.444) and operational (.414) objectives. The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'developing clear operational objectives and the proper implementation of both strategic (.512) and operational (.537) objectives. The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between developing clear performance indicators, as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.470) and operational (.474) objectives. The findings in addition indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'clearly prioritized performance indicators' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.515) and operational (.507) objectives. The findings reveal that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable following a structured process using a planning manual and the proper implementation of both strategic (.512) and operational (.529) objectives.

In terms of developing an operational plan for each unit, the findings additionally reveal that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between developing an operational plan for each unit, as a variable, and the

proper implementation of both strategic (.371) and operational (.390) objectives. The findings also report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable aligning a fixed budget for each activity and the proper implementation of both strategic (.456) and operational (.427) objectives. Moreover, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of allocating the needed resources for new initiatives and the proper implementation of both strategic (.413) and operational (.421) objectives.

The findings also report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between allocating the development of new income generation plans, as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.391) and operational (.373) objectives.

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Clear Vision	.478**	.000	.487**	.000
2	Clear mission statement	.462**	.000	.479**	.000
3	Clear organizational values	.382**	.000	.349**	.000
4	Clear Strategic Objectives	.444**	.000	.414**	.000
5	Clear Operational Objectives	.512**	.000	.537**	.000
6	Clear performance indicators	.470**	.000	.474**	.000
7	Clear Prioritized Performance Indicators	.517**	.000	.505**	.000
8	Structured Process using Planning Manual	.512**	.000	.529**	.000
9	Operational Plan for each Unit	.371**	.000	.390**	.000
10	Ensuring Fixed Budget for initiatives	.456**	.000	.427**	.000
11	Allocating needed resources	.413**	.000	.421**	.000
12	New income generation plans	.391**	.000	.373**	.000

Table 28: Strategic plan formulation

The findings of stakeholders' involvement in strategic plan formulation as shown in Table 29 report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'lower-ranking staff involvement' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.426) and operational (.365)

objectives. Moreover, the findings indicate that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the 'internal consultants' involvement' variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.405) and operational (.344) objectives. Additionally the findings indicate that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the variable of external consultants' involvement and the proper implementation of both strategic (.350) and operational (.372) objectives.

In terms of the private sector involvement, the findings indicate that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the private sector involvement variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.334) and operational (.311) objectives. With regard to external public involvement, the findings indicate that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the 'external public involvement' variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.243) and operational (.263) objectives.

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Lower-ranking staff involvement	.426**	.000	.365**	.000
2	Internal consultants involvement	.405**	.000	.344**	.000
3	External consultants involvement	.350**	.000	.372**	.000
4	Private sector involvement	.334**	.000	.311**	.000
5	External public involvement	.243**	.000	.263**	.000

Table 29: Internal and external stakeholders' involvement in strategic formulation

9.2 Strategic Plan Implementation

Table 30 below shows the findings of strategic plan implementation that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of 'proper control over implementation' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.546) and operational (.507) objectives.

With regard to middle management support, the findings suggest that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between the middle management support variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.611) and operational (.627) objectives. The findings also report that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between top management support variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.569) and operational (.562) objectives.

The findings moreover indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'having the vision aligned with lower-ranking staff operations' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.517) and operational (.485) objectives. Additionally the findings indicate that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between 'decision making linked with vision', as a variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.595) and operational (.570) objectives. The findings also indicate that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between having enough staff for implementation as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.289) and operational (.241) objectives.

The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'allowing enough time for implementation' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.419) and operational (.418) objectives. However, the findings indicate that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the adequate financial resources variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.283) and operational (.252) objectives.

The findings at the same time indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between adequate technological resources, as a

variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.378) and operational (.357) objectives.

The findings also indicate that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between the variable of integration and the proper implementation of both strategic (.555) and operational (.517) objectives. Moreover, the findings indicate that there is a fairly moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of 'no competition between activities' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.330) and operational (.377) objectives.

In terms of aligning a fixed budget with each activity, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between aligning a fixed budget to each activity, among the variables and the proper implementation of both strategic (.456) and operational (.427) objectives. The findings also report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable adequate organizational structure and the proper implementation of both strategic (.421) and operational (.415) objectives. However, the findings interestingly report that there is a very weak positive Pearson correlation between adequate reward systems variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.162) and operational (.174) objectives.

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Proper Control of Implementation	.546**	.000	.507**	.000
2	Middle Management Support	.611**	.000	.627**	.000
3	Top Management Support	.569**	.000	.562**	.000
4	Vision aligned with lower-ranking staff operations	.517**	.000	.485**	.000
5	Decision Making linked with Vision	.595**	.000	.570**	.000
6	Enough Staff for Implementation	.289**	.000	.241**	.000
7	Enough Time for Implementation	.419**	.000	.418**	.000
8	Adequate financial resources	.283**	.000	.252**	.000
9	Adequate technological resources	.378**	.000	.357**	.000
10	Integration	.555**	.000	.517**	.000
11	No competition between activities	.330**	.000	.377**	.000
12	Aligning fixed budget with each activity	.456**	.000	.427**	.000
13	Adequate Organizational Structure	.421**	.000	.415**	.000
14	Adequate reward systems	.162**	.000	.174**	.000

Table 30: Strategic plan implementation

9.2.1 Internal and External Communication and Cooperation

The findings as shown in Table 31 report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable effective internal communication and the proper implementation of both strategic (.399) and operational (.402) objectives. The findings also report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between internally cascading strategic plan, as a variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.469) and operational (.399) objectives. The findings additionally indicate that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the variable of effective external communication and the proper implementation of both strategic (.326) and operational (.318) objectives.

In regard to the effective cooperation between the formulation and implementation groups, the findings report that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'effective cooperation between formulation and implementation groups' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.557) and operational (.518) objectives. In addition, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'effective cooperation between departments' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.434) and operational (.440) objectives.

With regard to the cooperation with key stakeholders, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of effective cooperation with key stakeholders and the proper implementation of both strategic (.358) and operational (.370) objectives.

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Effective Internal Communication	.399**	.000	.402**	.000
2	Cascading Strategic Plan Internally	.469**	.000	.399**	.000
3	Effective External Communication	.326**	.000	.318**	.000
4	Effective Cooperation between Groups	.557**	.000	.518**	.000
5	Effective Cooperation between Departments	.434**	.000	.440**	.000
6	Effective Cooperation with key stakeholders	.358**	.000	.370**	.000

Table 31: Internal and external communications and cooperation

9.2.2 Commitment to Implementation

Table 32 below shows that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of lower-ranking staff commitment to attaining objectives and the proper implementation of both strategic (.470) and operational (.461) objectives. The findings also report that there is a weak

positive Pearson correlation between the variable lower-ranking staff commitment to vision and the proper implementation of both strategic (.279) and operational (.264) objectives.

In terms of the middle management commitment to vision, the findings report that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between middle management commitment to vision, as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.577) and operational (.612) objectives. The findings also report that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between top management commitment to vision, as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.555) and operational (.537) objectives. Moreover, the findings report that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between the variable top management commitment to managing for results and the proper implementation of both strategic (.592) and operational (.571) objectives.

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Lower-ranking staff Commitment to Objectives	.470**	.000	.461**	.000
2	Lower-ranking staff Commitment to vision	.279**	.000	.264**	.000
3	Middle management commitment to vision	.577**	.000	.612**	.000
4	Top management commitment to vision	.555**	.000	.537**	.000
5	Top management is committed for managing for results	.592**	.000	.571**	.000

Table 32: Commitment to implementation

9.2.3 Strategic Management Skills and Knowledge Development

The findings of strategic management skills and knowledge development as shown in Table 33 indicate that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation

between the 'proper middle management skills' variable and the proper implementation of both strategic objectives (.576) and operational objectives (.551). The findings also indicate that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between the adequate training for the strategic management variable and the proper implementation of both strategic objectives (.583) and operational objectives (.509). Moreover, the findings indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of proper knowledge among lower-ranking staff and the proper implementation of both strategic (.467) and operational (.472) objectives. The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of clear lower-ranking staff duties and the proper implementation of both strategic (.313) and operational (.306) objectives. The findings additionally indicate that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between the variable of understanding the strategic management process and the proper implementation of both strategic (.597) and operational (.556) objectives

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Proper Middle Management Skills	.576**	.000	.551**	.000
2	Adequate Strategic Planning Training	.583**	.000	.509**	.000
3	Proper Lower-ranking staff Knowledge	.467**	.000	.472**	.000
4	Clear Lower-ranking staff Duties	.313**	.000	.306**	.000
5	Understanding Strategic Planning Process	.597**	.000	.556**	.000

Table 33: Strategic management skills and knowledge development

9.3 Performance Management and Evaluation

The findings of performance management and evaluation as shown in Table 34 indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of a solid reporting system and the proper implementation of both strategic (.448) and operational (.458) objectives. The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between linking implementation with the individual's performance, as a variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.428) and operational (.381) objectives. The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of reviewing performance data continuously and the proper implementation of both strategic (.532) and operational (.481) objectives. However, the findings indicate that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between linking strategic planning with performance management, and the proper implementation of strategic objectives (.566), and operational objectives (.537). The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of monitoring performance and the proper implementation of both strategic (.542) and operational (.525) objectives.

In terms of sharing organizational performance with the public, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of sharing organizational performance with the public and the proper implementation of both strategic (.470) and operational (.374) objectives. The findings also indicate that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between proper and frequent strategic planning evaluation, as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.532) and operational (.499) objectives.

Regarding the evaluating of top management's performance, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of evaluating top management's performance with the public and the proper implementation of both strategic (.437) and operational (.405) objectives. The findings moreover indicate that there is a moderately strong positive Pearson correlation between the middle management evaluation variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.523) and operational (.528) objectives.

With regard to monitoring internal and external trends, the findings indicate that there is among the variables a moderate positive Pearson correlation between monitoring internal and external trends and the proper implementation of both strategic (.517) and operational (.500) objectives.

Moreover, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the variable of modifying the organizational culture and the proper implementation of both strategic (.518) and operational (.486) objectives. The findings also report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between modifying the human resources regulations, as a variable, and the proper implementation of both strategic (.437) and operational (.405) objectives. Additionally, the findings report that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between modifying the organizational structure variable and the proper implementation of both strategic (.477) and operational (.462) objectives.

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Solid Reporting System	.448**	.000	.458**	.000
2	Linking Implementation with Individual's Performance	.428**	.000	.381**	.000
3	Reviewing Performance Data Continuously	.532**	.000	.481**	.000
4	Linking Strategic Planning with Performance Management at all levels	.566**	.000	.537**	.000
5	Monitoring performance	.542**	.000	.525**	.000
6	Sharing organizational performance with the public	.470**	.000	.374**	.000
7	Proper and frequent evaluation	.532**	.000	.499**	.000
8	Evaluating top management's performance	.437**	.000	.405**	.000
9	Middle management evaluation	.523**	.000	.528**	.000
10	Monitoring internal and external trends	.517**	.000	.500**	.000
11	Modifying the organizational culture	.518**	.000	.486**	.000
12	Modifying the HRM regulations	.406**	.000	.388**	.000
13	Modifying the organizational structure	.477**	.000	.462**	.000

Table 34: Performance management and evaluation

9.4 Inspiring and strong leadership

The findings report as shown in Table 35 that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between the variable 'inspiring and strong leadership' and the proper implementation of both strategic (.545) and operational (.513) objectives.

No	Variable	Proper Strategic Objectives Implementation		Proper Operational Objectives Implementation	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Inspired and Strong Leadership	.545**	.000	.513**	.000

Table 35: Inspiring and strong Leadership

As noted above, because they must make the transition from strategic planning to the strategic management approach, it is essential for governmental organizations to focus on the most appropriate objectives and to manage effectively to achieve these objectives. Hence, it is important to explore the strength of the relationship between the strategic and operational objectives and the core leadership variables related to leaders, since inspiring and strong role models show that they help to achieve this, thus revealing which variables are likely to be closely related to the level of the transition from strategic planning to holistic strategic management. Moreover, as shown below in Table 36, the findings reveal that there is a very strong positive Pearson correlation between inspiring and strong role model leaders and three related variables, namely, ensuring process integration by top management (.804), top management's commitment to vision (.707) and top management support (.685). The findings also show that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between inspiring and strong role model leaders and two other related variables, namely, results-oriented top management (.586) and modifying organizational culture (.574).

Additionally, the findings show that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between inspiring and strong role model leaders and seven related variables: the evaluation of top management's performance (.539), modifying organizational structure (.534), monitoring internal and external trends (.525), modifying human resources regulations (.509), linking implementation with individuals' performance (.496), reviewing performance continuously (.491), allocating the needed resources (.462), and internally cascading the strategic plan to all levels in the organization (.458).

No	Variable	Strong and Inspired Leadership	
		Pearson Correlation	p-value Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Top Management ensuring process integrations	.804**	.000
2	Top Management's Commitment to Vision	.707**	.000
3	Top Management Support	.685**	.000
4	Results-oriented Top Management	.586**	.000
5	Top management modifying organizational Culture	.574**	.000
6	Top Management reporting its performance evaluation	.539**	.000
7	Top Management modifying organizational structure	.534**	.000
8	Top Management monitoring internal and external trends	.525**	.000
9	Top management modifying HRM Regulations	.509**	.000
10	Top Management linking Implementation with Individual Performance	.496**	.000
11	Top Management reviewing performance continuously	.491**	.000
12	Top Management Allocating needed resources	.462**	.000
13	Top Management internally cascading strategic plan	.458**	.000

Table 36: Variables related to inspiring and strong leadership

It is worth noting that because the p-value for both strategic and operational objectives is less than 0.05, as shown in Tables from 27 to 36, there is a statistically significant relationship between both strategic and operational objectives and all variables related to the above elements which are strategic plan formulation, stakeholders' involvement, internal and external communication and cooperation, strategic plan implementation, commitment, strategic planning skills and knowledge development, performance management and evaluation, and inspiring and strong leadership. Moreover, because the p-value for all leadership variables is less than 0.05, as shown in Table 36, there is a statistically significant relationship between the top management variable mentioned above and the inspiring and strong leadership.

10. Chapter Summary

Chapter Four set out to explore the quantitative findings generated after analyzing the questionnaires. It adopts descriptive statistics to analyze 270 questionnaires that were collected from 32 governmental organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain by calculating the mean and standard deviation for each survey item, and by using correlation analysis. The participants in this quantitative analysis were Bahraini civil servants, including top managers, middle managers, internal experts, and lower-ranking employees.

The findings of Chapter Four reveal that half of all participants agreed or strongly agreed that the top management, middle management, and the lower-ranking staff in their organizations see strategic management as beneficial and consider it critical to their organization's success. The findings of Chapter Four also reveal that the average level in Bahrain's public sector in terms of strategic plan formulation is low, with a percentage of 36.71%. The findings also reveal that the average level in terms of strategic plan implementation is very weak with a percentage of 28.38%. The findings additionally reported that the average level of strategic plan evaluation in the researched organizations is very weak with a percentage of 26.83%.

Moreover, the findings revealed that only 30% of all participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the formulation, implementation, outcomes and strategic management process of their organizations. Additionally, the findings reveal that the average level of the 6 leading edge leadership elements that help with the successful implementation of the organizational strategic and operational objectives is limited, with a percentage of 31%.

The findings of Chapter Four additionally report that there is a very weak negative Pearson correlation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives with variables such as gender, managerial level, working experience, and organizational size. The findings of Chapter Four also suggest that there is a weak positive Pearson correlation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives with variables such as the importance of strategic management by middle management and by lower-ranking staff, developing clear organizational values, the involvement of internal and external consultants, private sector involvement, external public involvement, effective external communication, enough staff for implementation, adequate financial resources, adequate reward systems, lower-ranking staff' commitment to vision, and clear lower-ranking staff' duties.

In Chapter Four, moreover, it was found that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and with such variables as the importance of strategic planning by top management, developing a clear vision, having a clear mission statement, developing clear strategic objectives, clear operational objectives, clear performance indicators, prioritized performance indicators: or following a structured process using a planning manual, developing an operational plan for each unit, developing an allocated fixed budget for each activity, allocating the resources needed for new initiatives, allocating new income generation plans, lower-ranking staff involvement, effective internal communication, internally cascading strategic plans, effective cooperation between formulation and implementation groups, effective cooperation between departments, effective cooperation with key stakeholders, proper

control over implementation, top management support, a vision aligned with lower-ranking staff' operations, decision making linked with vision, enough time for implementation, adequate technological resources, integration, no competition between activities, allocating a fixed budget to each activity, an adequate organizational structure, lower-ranking staff' commitment to attain objectives, top management commitment to vision, a solid reporting system, linking implementation with an individual's performance, reviewing performance data continuously, the sharing of organizational performance with the public, evaluating top management's performance, modifying human resources regulations, and modifying the organizational structure. Moreover, the findings of Chapter Four included a strong positive Pearson correlation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and such variables as middle management support, middle management commitment to vision, top management commitment to manage for results, proper middle management skills, adequate strategic planning training, understanding the strategic management process, linking strategic management with performance management, monitoring performance, proper frequent strategic planning evaluation, middle management evaluation, monitoring internal and external trends, modifying organizational culture, and inspiring and strong leadership. At the same time, and in terms of the strength of the relationship between the core leadership variables related to inspiring and strong role model leaders who help to achieve the strategic and operational objectives, and hence are likely to be closely related to the level of transition from strategic planning to strategic management, the findings of Chapter Four reveal that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between inspiring and strong role model leaders

and the three related variables of ensuring process integrations by top management, top management's commitment to vision and top management support. The findings of Chapter Four show too that there is a strong positive Pearson correlation between inspiring and strong role model leaders and two related variables: results-oriented top management and modifying the organizational culture. Finally, the findings of Chapter Four show that there is a moderate positive Pearson correlation between inspiring and strong role model leaders and the following seven related variables: evaluation of top management's performance, modifying the organizational structure, monitoring internal and external trends, modifying human resources regulations, linking implementation with individuals' performance, reviewing performance continuously, allocating needed resources, and an internally cascading strategic plan to all levels within the organization.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusions

1. Introduction

As noted in previous chapters, the main objective of the research proposed here is to investigate strategic management practices in the public sector organizations of Bahrain. More specifically, this research explores the strategic formulation, implementation and evaluation process in governmental organizations in Bahrain and then the research explores the the practical implications and elements that are related to the successful strategic management approach in these organizations. It is also noted that this research seeks to answer the following questions:

Question 1: *How were strategic planning processes developed, implemented and evaluated in the public sector organizations of the Kingdom of Bahrain?*

Question 2: *To what extent were public sector organizations broadening their strategic planning efforts into a strategic management approach?*

Question 3: *What are the practical implications for policy makers and practitioners of strategic planning in the Kingdom of Bahrain?*

The present chapter (Chapter Five) is divided into five sections. Section one discusses the strategic plan formulation in public sector organizations in Bahrain. Section two discusses the implementation of this plan, while section

three discusses the evaluation of it. Section four discusses the transition from strategic planning to strategic management and finally section five discusses the practical implications and elements related to a successful strategic management approach.

2. Section One: the Strategic Plan Formulation Stage

The present section discusses the elements of the strategic plan formulation stage. First it considers the findings of developing a clear vision, mission statement and values. Second, it discusses the findings of developing a strategic vision involving public and lower-level staff input. Third, this section looks at the findings about internal and external consultants' involvement. Fourth, it examines the findings about the private sector's involvement. Fifth, it analyses the findings of developing and prioritizing objectives aligned with vision. Sixth, it brings in discuss the findings on developing departmental operational plans aligned with the strategic plan. Finally it discusses the findings of securing financial and technological resources. However, before discussing the strategic development stage, it is essential to discuss the importance of strategic planning in the researched organizations.

2.1 Importance of Strategic Management

The findings in Chapter Four reported that around half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that in their organizations the top management, the middle management and lower-ranking staff see strategic management as beneficial and critical to their organization's success.

These findings suggest that the staff in the organizations under review would provide high commitment and buy-in to the organizational vision and objectives: hence, they would manage operations effectively, improve the

organization's performance and deliver high quality services. However, the findings reported that there is less than full agreement among the respondents that strategic management benefits their organizations. This implies that these organizations have not sought the radical cultural changes in personnel awareness, personnel training or the participation of middle management and front-line employees in developing the organization made by these employees in the strategic implementation phase.

Now it is important to discuss the elements of the strategic plan formulation stage mentioned above.

2.2 Developing Clear Vision, Mission Statement and Values

According to the findings of the quantitative analysis, more than half of the respondents in the survey questionnaire reported that their organizational vision, mission statement and organizational values were altogether clear to all employees; only around quarter of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that this was so. It is clear from the findings that there is no full agreement between participants regarding this issue.

It is worth noting that having a clear organizational vision means having a clear picture of the organization in the future that would help employees to see where the organization is heading (Bouhali 2015; Chen 2015). Clear vision serves as a focal point to all employees that include the activities to be pursued and the capabilities to be developed. Sharing clear vision throughout all units of the organization would create enthusiasm, emotions and excitement among employees and inspire them to be engaged effectively in the strategic planning process (Kazmi 2015; Kerlinová 2014; Janaki 2012).

Moreover, a clear mission statement would identify the organizational purpose in order to satisfy the current and potential needs in the organization's core competencies and capabilities (Drumaux 2007). A clear mission statement is considered a foundation for future decision making. If the researched organizations do not have a clear mission, the employees do not properly focus on the nature and purpose of the organization. Top management also finds it difficult to guide day-to-day operations. Additionally, the values and the beliefs that guide the organization are considered the foundation for attaining its goals and objectives. As an essential part of strategic development, clear organizational values help top management to influence the behavior and the attitude of the staff and enhance the organization's reputation.

2.3 Developing a strategic vision involving public and lower-level staff input

The majority of respondents in the quantitative analysis stated that the lower level staffs in their organizations were not involved in the strategic planning effort at all, although top management had been central to it. As most respondents said, the strategic planning process is in most cases conducted with a top-down approach: lower ranking employees merely received the completed strategic and operational plans. Additionally, the findings revealed that most of the respondents claimed that the external public was equally not involved at all in the strategic planning development process, the opposite of what is recommended in the strategic management literature.

According to the literature (Hofstede 1983, 1984), management and organization are culturally dependent because managing and organizing do

not consist of making or moving tangible objects, but of manipulating symbols which have meaning to the people who are managed or organized; thus management and organization are penetrated with the same culture from beginning to end as in our family, our school, our work environment, and in our society. Elbanna (2006) has argued that attempts to transfer strategic management concepts to another country without careful attention to cultural settings are problematic.

It is worth noting that the weak involvement of lower ranking employees in strategic plan formulation may be based on top management's cultural style (Ali 1993; Elbanna et al 2006), for top managers can adopt different decisions and styles depending on the pattern of organization and individual characteristics. Top managers may make a variety of decision styles depending on the situation and the type of decision involved (Ali 1993). According to Ali (1993), there are several decision styles that top managers can adopt. Among these styles are Authoritarian (Top management's own decisions), Consultative (joint decisions with subordinates), and Participative (delegation of decisions to subordinates). In the context of Arab culture, Abbas claimed that some previous studies of Arab top managers reveal that they adopt to some extent the consultative style, since managers share problems with subordinates and make joint decisions with them. Moreover, Abbas reported that some previous studies reveal that Arab top managers display a high preference for the participative style, while some studies reported that the participative style is not an alien concept to Arab culture. The argument for this is that top Arab managers prefer the participative style because some of them have been influenced by Western management philosophy and also because they believe in democracy. Moreover, such

top managers seem to be hopeful, optimistic, and team oriented. However, the consultative style may indicate that the decision making process takes time and delays change during the negotiation process between top managers and subordinates in an Arabic culture.

It is worth saying that successful strategic management approaches require all the components in the process because an integrated system has to be reviewed in a comprehensive and holistic strategic management framework based on developing a strategic vision involving internal and external audiences (Fred 2011; Hitt 2011; Ionita and Cioc 2014).

It is also important to reflect that little trouble is generally taken in governmental organizations in Bahrain to ensure the participation of lower ranking employees at the level of overall strategic management, least of all at the formulation stage. This omission does little to raise the employees' understanding of business or to ensure their commitment, ownership or willingness to attain the organization's goals and objectives, thus failing to improve the working environment and to secure good implementation in practice (Fooladv et al. 2015; Ayers 2010; Blackmon 2008). Moreover, it should be recalled that in recent years, countries have begun to value the service-based economy, where services are considered central to creating value (Ferlie 1992; Gantick and Lipe 2002; Mulhare 1999). Frontline employees play a critical role in the success of both private and public service organizations, for they link the external stakeholders with the operations inside the organization (Agwu and Awele 2015; Ammons 2015; Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016). Thus, to ensure firm engagement from the employees, it is vital to raise the level of frontline staff involvement in strategic planning. If this is the case, employees of all ranks must be trained

in various issues concerning the implementation of strategic plans and should be allowed to fully participate from the beginning of the formulation of strategy to the evaluation of the strategic planning (Montanari and Baracker 1986; Miller and Cardinal 1994; Prks and Hilyert 2016). This will help to ensure that all the employees are involved in making decisions about the formulation and the implementing of strategic plans (Abdel-Maksoud et al 2015; Elbanna and Fadol 2016; Pollanen et al. 2017). This involvement helps to bridge the gap between intentions and action and also helps to implement the strategic plans which will further the initiatives, goals and objectives desired by the organization. Moreover, involving external stakeholders to understand their views in detail would bring them on board in order to set strategic objectives and also share with them possible policies and strategic directions. Nevertheless, some respondents in the present research take a different view, suggesting that it is difficult to plan if governments invite many people from inside and outside the organization to share the planning process and take greater control of it. These responses claim that involving people from inside the organization, the lower ranks of staff, in particular, should be considered a waste of time which distracts them from other tasks. Moreover, involving outside groups in the strategic planning process would increase their influence, stir them up and raise their expectations.

It is worth countering such arguments by insisting that involving internal stakeholders is important, because they will share their knowledge and perspectives in the strategic planning process, thus developing among them an agreement to common objectives and positively contributing to the implementation of strategy (Taylor and College 2012; Thomson 2011;

Walker et al. 2010). Moreover, the involvement of internal stakeholders, that of lower-ranking staff in particular and also the involvement of external stakeholders in the strategic management process will ensure ownership and high commitment to the strategic planning process that leads to better organizational performance (Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016; Chaola et al. 2015). This is not the case in most governmental organizations in Bahrain, according to the investigations reported in the present research.

2.4 Involvement of Internal and External Consultants

The findings reported a low percentage of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that their organizations had involved internal and external consultants in the strategic plan formulation process. It is worth noting that involving both internal and external consultants in this process would have helped to drive successful change and support the implementation of strategic change in the researched organizations. Using the input of internal and external consultants would have helped the organization in strategic thinking, tapping employees' knowledge and experience, encouraging discussion and debate and managing conflicts (Cox et al. 2012; Fred 2011; Hitt 2011; Ionita and Cioc 2014). Moreover, it would have helped to ensure sound organizational vision and mission, reviewing the current situation and anticipating future opportunities. In addition, it would have helped to identify and facilitate the desired outcomes and the drivers needed to achieve them.

2.5 Private Sector Involvement

The findings at the same time revealed that only half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organizations had developed proper partnership relations with private sector organizations and had encouraged their contribution in the formulation of strategic planning. It is well known that

strategic management practices have been imported from the private sector (Bonn and Christodoulou 1996; Montanari and Baracker 1986; Ramírez and Selsky 2014). On the basis of the findings, it could be assumed that unless they welcomed private sector contributions, top management in governmental organizations would miss a chance to learn and acquire up to date strategic management knowledge and best practices. Moreover, not involving the private sector in the strategic formulation process might undermine the efforts of top management to secure additional financial resources and to win the sponsorship agreements provided by the private sector to fund certain strategic plan formulation activities.

2.6 Develop and Prioritize Objectives Aligned with Vision

The quantitative analysis reported that just less than half of the respondents claimed that their organizations had developed and prioritized clear strategic and operational objectives aligned with vision. Having unclear strategic and operational objectives and unclear performance indicators with unclear prioritized performance indicators will lead employees to work on all objectives and initiatives without understanding which ones are the most important to senior management (Rkeli and Ek 2010; Stirbu 2011; Yongjin 2013)

With the above findings in mind, this will result in all objectives being covered in part, but in the completion of none. Moreover, the ambiguity of the strategic and operational objectives will lead to difficulties in implementing the strategic plans (Auka and Chepngeno 2016; Bianchi and Salvatore 2015; Borrozine and Rodrigues 2016). Additionally, the lack of clarity in the strategic and operational objectives, the performance indicators and the prioritization of the latter will confront top management when they

begin to track the organization's success in achieving the desired strategic vision and objectives (Chaola et al. 2015; Chukayeva and Akzharov 2016; Daigneault 2016). It is worth noting that one important task for leaders is to use their judgment in the decision making process to set clear strategic and operational objectives, initiatives, prioritization, manpower selection and ways to handle unusual crises (Dougherty 2016; Ebdon et al. 2016; Ferreira and Proença 2015). These decisions are based on data availability and analysis. Moreover, objective setting is an art that requires leaders to make numerous personal judgments. To set clear organizational objectives and to properly prioritize them, effective leaders need communication skills, influence skills, analytical skills, social skills, technical skills and the ability to continually learn (Jawahar and Harindran 2016; Liepa-Zemesa and Hess 2016).

2.7 Develop Operational Plans aligned with the Strategic Plan

In terms of developing departmental operational plans aligned with the strategic plan, the quantitative analysis revealed that the level is low within the governmental organizations under research. The findings revealed that only around a quarter of the respondents reported that their organizations had followed a structured process using a planning manual in the strategic planning formulation process. The findings moreover indicate that less than half of the respondents said that all units within their organizations had developed their own operational plans. The findings reflect that top management in these organizations had not adequately integrated the strategic and operational levels in a common and structured approach that ensured the systematic interrelationship and interdependence of all the elements of the strategic planning process. Moreover it seems that the top

management of these organizations was not making enough effort to help operating departments to establish their annual operational objectives, linked to the strategic plan. Top management also did not properly help the operational departments to outline the required resources and time frame to achieve the operational objectives or set up the appropriate measures to assess the progress of those objectives. The operational plan provides an overview for top management of performance over the year. The operational plan is also considered a blueprint and guide for each department in the organization to refer to easily. The operational plan needs to be simple and easy for key decision makers to read (Meyer 2016).

2.8 Securing Financial and Technological Resources

The findings from the analysis suggest that only one third of all respondents claimed that top management in their organizations aligns a fixed financial budget to each operational objective. The findings also reported that few respondents agreed that their organizations had developed new income generation and had allocated the needed resources to fund new strategic initiatives. Moreover, the findings also illustrate that only a third of all respondents reported that top management in their organizations secured adequate finance for the strategic plan formulation process. This suggests that top management in these organizations is not identifying the needed financial resources to fund its initiatives. Moreover, it suggests that top management is not properly ensuring strong links between the strategic management process and budgeting. The lack of such links reflects that top management was not thinking strategically, with adverse consequences for the organization's ability to move in a strategic direction. It is worth noting that budgeting is central to organizational operations since each department

and unit in the organization must submit its operational plan for approval, including its annual financial budget (Dougherty 2016; Polowczyk 2012).

Moreover, it seems from the findings that top management has no clear plan to reflect changing strategic priorities. This creates a gap between the strategic plan formulation process and the allocation of financial resources through the budgeting process. It may be said that a proper join between the strategic plan formulation process and budgeting would improve the organization's effectiveness and move the organization closer to fulfilling its strategic and operational objectives (Berry and Wechsler 1995; Bryson et al. 2014).

Additionally, the findings show that top management was not securing enough technological resources to enhance its internal and external communications. As a result, top management would have difficulty in measuring and assessing individuals and organizational performance. It would also face some challenges in evaluating the feasibility of proposed strategies. It is important to keep in mind that tracking the progress of the implementation of strategic and operational objectives over time through adequate technology and reporting would ensure that the needed resources were in place to achieve these objectives (Ammons 2015; Atkinson and Mackenzie 2016).

It is clear from these findings about the strategic plan formulation stage that the respondents in the present research did not fully agree that the strategic formulation process benefited their organization. It is also clear that part of these organizations lacked a clear vision, mission statement and values. Moreover, the internal and external stakeholders were not or were only partially involved in developing the strategic vision of the organizations under

research. Within those organizations, there was also a weak prioritization planning to be linked with the vision. Additionally, the researched organizations have developed a weak alignment between departmental operational plans and the strategic plan and have not properly secured the needed financial and technological resources for its strategic management process.

3. Section Two: Strategic Plan Implementation Stage

Business performance is not connected in the strategic plan formulation stage alone, but it is also concerned in the implementation of the formulated strategy to create and maintain a competitive position for the organization. Top managers need to integrate the organizational functions and activities in order to effectively implement the strategic plan (Harrington and Ottenbacher 2011; Subba 2010)

In terms of strategic plan implementation, the findings of the present research revealed that the level is low, with a percentage of 28.38% reported in Chapter Four. The findings of the quantitative analysis indicate that this low percentage is due to several factors, such as weak integration between vision and frontline operations, an inadequate organizational structure, inadequate prioritization and human resources planning, weak internal and external communications, inadequate strategic planning skills and knowledge development, weak support from middle and top management, a weak decision making process, low commitment to the implementation of the strategic planning from most employees, improper implementation of the strategic and operational objectives, weak control over implementation and weak incentives. These factors will be discussed as follows.

3.1 Vision Alignment with Lower-ranking Staff' Operations

No high agreement was found among the respondents that the vision of their organization was properly aligned with lower-ranking staff operations. It seems in this case that top management was not effectively helping lower-ranking staff to understand the organizational vision. It also seems that top management did not clearly share the vision of the organization and did not properly help lower-ranking staff to translate the vision into action plans, nor to assign accountability for such plans. This would have created a number of activities, but in fact not many were implemented and this may have reduced the success of the strategic implementation and misled lower-ranking staff about the part that they might play in fulfilling the organizational vision.

3.2 The Organizational Structure

In the findings, there is very low agreement among the respondents that their organizations had a suitable organizational structure for aiding the implementation of strategic plans. It seems that these organizations have a bureaucratic organizational structure which is centralized and oriented towards the status quo and process. Such a structure would frustrate the internal collaboration between members of staff, groups and departments and this might discourage independent actions. Moreover, structures of this type would not influence these organizations to be more change-oriented and centered more on citizens and results. If the organizational structure is not highly appropriated, a heavy workload is generated in some departments but not others and responsibilities are not effectively shared. It is worth noting that a better designed organizational structure would facilitate the feedback

of information; this could be important for further strategic planning and evaluation.

3.3 Prioritization, Time and Human Resources

Findings reveal that there was high competition between activities in most of the researched organizations. This suggests that these organizations lack a strategy of prioritization in ranking its initiatives. Having long list of initiatives that need to be covered, but no clear priority plan leads to incomplete work on all initiatives and the waste of money, time and effort. Thus, establishing strategic plans and setting action plans with a clear prioritizing strategy are highly recommended guide-lines for top management in implementing strategy.

The findings of the present research also indicate that very few respondents agree that their organizations had enough staff to implement strategic planning. This demonstrates that there is a weakness in human resources planning in these organizations, which might lead to their needs not being met. Having an adequate number of staff in the implementation phase would minimize or prevent the gap which otherwise is created between what was planned and what can be done, because the organization would sacrifice or delay some important activities. Moreover, it goes without saying that having fewer staff for strategic implementation might result in more effort and more pressure for each member of staff, hence, a lower quality of work, motivation and ownership.

The findings, moreover, reveal very little agreement in the respondents that there is enough time for strategic plan implementation in their organizations. These findings suggest that top management in the organizations under

scrutiny were not properly ensuring continuity between tasks and fit across the activities of the strategic plan. Today's complex and ever changing environment demands strategic plans that must be implemented and still produce positive results (Kerlinová and Tomášková 2014; Koteen 1997). Hence, allowing too little time to implement the strategic plan of these organizations might minimize the chance to build unique capabilities and the skills needed to implement the established priorities Ferreira and Proença 2015).

3.4 The Integration of Processes, Structures, Resources and People

The findings of the research show that the respondents did not often believe that the top management of their organizations ensured the best possible integration of processes, structures, resources and people. Such findings reflect that top management had not properly integrated the effort needed for several different functions in the operational plan. Lack of integration between processes, structures, resources and people might create growing gaps between the strategic plan and the operational business plans. This would lead to a failure to determine and justify the allocation of resources (Nurmandi and Purnomo 2011; Poister 2010).

A successful approach to implementation requires top management to view all the components of strategic planning as an integrated system that focused on reviewing the gaps that can develop; this involves positioning the organization to provide the unique services required by the public (Plant 2009; Poister 2010).

3.5 Internal Communication and Cooperation

The findings in the present research reflect that the internal communication between the employees in the researched organizations is not effective. There were also inadequate relationships between the groups formulating strategic plan and those carrying it out. Moreover, the departments did not cooperate well. These organizations are not trying hard enough to facilitate ongoing internal communication and are not facilitating joint problem-solving or other actions among staff, groups and departments. This is likely to provoke misunderstanding of the relationship between the efforts to implement decisions and their results (Plant 2009; Poister 2010). Moreover, poor internal communication within the researched organizations would result because of cultural issues, because, as Elbanna et al. (2011) argue, top Arab managers tend to not differentiate between personal and structural conflicts, which may discourage effective participation in strategic management processes.

According to Poister (2010), it is worth noting that effective internal communication and cooperation between staff, groups and departments ensures the provision of timely information on the progress of implementation and shows why the results can differ from the stated operational and strategic objectives. The manner of internal communication is expected to encourage feedback, questions and clarification in order to promote understanding. This interaction helps employees and departments to discover in a social environment what the strategic direction is and why it has been developed. It also ensures the availability of the needed information with minimum noise at all organizational levels. Additionally, the slowness of data movement in the organization requires increased

cooperation between staff, groups and departments by means of a network to identify critical issues respecting programmes and projects directed towards improving individual and organizational performance (Poister 2010).

The findings additionally reported that very few respondents agreed that top management internally cascaded the strategic plan all the way down their organization. Cascading strategic plans was often considered a serious problem in implementing strategic plans (Plant 2009; Poister 2010). This finding shows that top management in most of the researched organizations made too little effort to ask each functional area to identify how they would contribute to carrying out the overall strategic plan of their organization. Strategic plans cascaded by charismatic leaders through workshops, events and even celebrations can pass the message down and reduce the resistance of staff, thus making the implementation process easier. But these things rarely occur in most of the researched organizations.

3.6 The External Communication

It is clear from the findings that the organizations under the current scrutiny were not properly trying to have a solid collaborative relationship with key external stakeholders. These organizations are also not putting enough effort into effective external communication with the public.

Proper communication and solid collaboration with external stakeholders tends to generate in them a greater sense of ownership and commitment. It also increases their participation in the process and produces better outcomes. External communication with members of the external public helps them to understand why the organization exists and what value it provides to citizens. Moreover, the improvement in the level of external

communication would allow for the development of longer-term integrated planning to address the future needs and development of the community. Additionally, ample communication and collaboration with external stakeholders would increase the organization's visibility, enhancing its reputation and influencing the public's perception (Plant 2009; Poister 2010).

3.7 Lower-Level Staff's Knowledge, Skills and Duties

The findings suggest that very few respondents agree that the lower-level staff in their organizations had proper knowledge of the strategic plans that would help them to implement it. The findings also indicate that respondents did not often accept that their organizations offered employees adequate training in strategic planning to implement the plans effectively. Moreover, it is clear from the findings that few respondents observed that the lower-level staff in their organizations had clear duties which helped them effectively at the implementation stage.

To meet organizational and performance expectations, governmental organizations need to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of their staff. It will be recalled that the rapidly changing environment of the public sector requires adaptability, flexibility and the capacity to immediately anticipate and address emerging issues (Montanari and Baracker 1986; Nartisa et al. 2012). Hence, lower-level employees need to be empowered effectively to deal with these challenges in order for them to deliver high quality services and to effectively engage with citizens. The lower-level employees need to be properly trained if they are to have the knowledge and capacity to act independently in achieving the organizational objectives. They also need to have the authority and the skills to make operational

decisions and the knowledge required to make wise decisions. Additionally, in order to have the authority to make decisions, lower-level staffs need to be clear about their duties. They also need to have a clear idea of the organizational factors implicated in their decisions and to understand the relationship between their duties, responsibilities and rewards programs (Ring and Perry 1985; Carlsen and Andersson 2011).

Moreover, there was clearly low agreement among respondents that the employees in their organizations understood the strategic plan formulation process before its implementation. This suggests that top management is not properly clarifying its expectations of the staff and not properly explaining the strategic management process to them. It is critical for everyone in the organization to understand the key business processes for which the departments are responsible. They also need to understand the specific activities and objectives for each department to aim at in the coming year. Moreover, they need to understand the key stakeholders in the process and the departments with which they will interact over the year. They furthermore need to understand the objectives of performance measurement and reporting.

3.8 Middle Management Skills

The findings suggest that very few respondents would concur that the middle management employees of their organizations had proper strategic management skills that could effectively aid the implementation of strategic plans. The findings show that most of the researched organizations had not adequately equipped their middle management with the required skills to tighten the link between their strategic plans and their everyday work. Middle

management needs to have the right skills to communicate and achieve the organization's strategic and operational objectives. Moreover, in these organizations this lack of skills in members of middle management would hamper their ability to adopt changes as they were implemented and would diminish their ability to deal with any resistance to change when the organization tried to introduce it (Carvalho et al. 2013; Berry and Wechsler 1995).

3.9 The Decision Making Process

The findings show that there is no high agreement between respondents that the decision making process at all levels in their organization is linked with the strategic plan. The findings suggest that these organizations set no clear and proper alignment between the needs of the senior decision makers who set the organization's strategic direction and other operational staff who deliver the service to the external public. It seems that top management was not adequately setting the organization's priorities either and not clearly identifying the process of implementing the strategic plan. This sometimes gave the impression that decisions were guided merely by the interests and satisfaction of the top management, even if this contradicted the organization's vision.

It is worth noting that gaps may be created if the strategic plan does not become a living document that guides top management in the decision making process (Duren 2010; Jen 2006; Mazzara et al. 2010). Moreover, it is also seems that top management in these organizations was not properly ensuring that each department and unit developed its operational plan and connected it to the overall strategic plan of the organization to adequately

achieve the strategic and operational objectives. It is worth saying that linking top management's decisions with the strategic plan would prevent such contradictions and keep the plan on the agreed track (Elbanna et al. 2016).

3.10 Top Management Support and Commitment

In the findings, there is a very low agreement among respondents that the top management of their organizations was providing the needed support to employees during the implementation of the strategic plan. This reflects the verdict that top management in these organizations does not properly understand its critical role, or how to execute it in terms of implementation. It seems that top management behaved as if good strategic plans got implemented with little additional direction and supervision from their side. It is worth addressing that top management need to ensure that formal action plans are developed, that the infrastructure supports the strategies, that the communication between planners and implementers is effective and that the implementing teams focus their efforts on the critical areas.

The findings also indicated that there is little agreement among respondents that the top management of their organizations was committed to the organizational vision and is results-oriented. This finding suggests that top management is not clear about its purpose and intent. It is also not trying hard enough to agree with internal staff on the strategic direction and shared vision. It seems that clarity and consistent communication regarding the mapping of desired outcomes and achievement of milestones is weak. It is worth saying that without genuine commitment from the top management to the organizational vision successful implementation is unlikely. Moreover,

without linking top management decisions with organizational vision and managing for results, the agreed outcomes are unlikely to be achieved (Junusbekova 2013; Mazzara et al. 2010).

3.11 Middle Management Commitment and Support

The respondents clearly indicated no high agreement that the middle management in their organizations was committed to the organizational vision during the strategic plan implementation. Moreover, according to the respondents, the middle management in their organizations was not providing the required support to employees at the strategic planning implementation stage. It seems from the findings that the researched organizations were not effectively motivating the middle management to be committed to the organizational vision and to provide the required support to lower-ranking staff during the implementation of plans. To effectively implement strategic plans, organizations need to involve the middle management from the beginning of strategic formulation and throughout strategic implementation up to strategic evaluation (Poister 2010). Moreover, middle management needs to be clear about the expected support they should provide to other employees in the implementation stage. Additionally, middle management needs to be equipped with the needed skills and knowledge to link daily activities to the strategic direction and also to be rewarded for their positive contributions (Plant 2009).

3.12 Lower-Level Staff's Commitment

Based on the findings, there seems low agreement among respondents that the lower-ranking staff in their organization were committed to the vision and to the implementation of the organizational objectives. Since the involvement

level of the lower-ranking staff in the strategic formulation process is very weak, as mentioned before, their commitment to the implementation of organizational vision and objectives is predictably low. If top management developed the strategic plan in isolation from lower-ranking staff, the risk would be high because the latter would resist the change needed in providing unique and customized services driven by the needs of its business and citizens. Thus top management needs to understand what it means to commit to the vision and objectives of the organizations and to increase the motivation of lower-ranking staff if it wishes to see its plans succeed (Poister 2010).

3.13 Objectives Implementation and Control

As reported in the findings, most of the respondents believe that their organizational strategic and operational objectives were not implemented properly. It seems that the mentioned organizations were not establishing the process and activities that would achieve the strategic and operational objectives defined in their strategic plans. These organizations also seem to have trouble n putting formulated strategy into effect. Moreover, if this is the case it suggests that these organizations had not properly communicated why the strategic and operational objectives were important and how these objectives would be achieved. Additionally, the current finding reflects that there are improper formal agreement procedures in these organizations that include the specific targets and key performance indicators to be achieved for its strategic and operational objectives.

The findings reported that according to respondents there was very low control in their organizations over the strategic implementation. This

suggests that these organizations were not providing proper direction and control over employees' activities. It is worth noting that supervising and providing control over the strategic implementation stage would identify training and development opportunities. It would also help to track progress, to assess the operational decisions, to maintain overall financial conditions and to build a positive organizational culture.

3.14 The Reward Systems

The findings show that there is low agreement from participants that their organizations had adequate reward systems that encouraged success and gave incentives for strategic planning implementation. These findings suggest that the organizations in question were not developing the right reward strategy to attract and motivate their staff. This would lead to poor performance and the outcomes might be quite different from the original intention. Moreover, if there are no clear criteria for a reward system, employees might feel that the incentives proposed would be in line with the interests of top management. Thus, top management in these organizations would also miss the opportunity to align the individuals' contributions with the reward systems and have concrete appraisal programs.

Based on the above findings of the strategic plan implementation stage in the researched organizations, it is worth noting that successful strategic plan implementation involves designing an appropriate organizational structure which ensures that the right divisional and functional managers are supported by the right backgrounds and skills. To ensure a proper strategy implementation process, organizations are recommended to analyze their organizational structure, organizational culture, power and conflicts.

Moreover, successful implementation requires managers to have the right policies, allocate the needed resources and receive up-to-date information that facilitates learning. In addition, effective communication is one of the most important items of all those responsible for the successful implementation of strategic plans. It is the item that should properly explain the duties, tasks and new responsibilities devolving on employees (Plant 2009; Poister 2010).

Communication coupled with understanding, shared by all employees is a crucial aspect of the process of strategy implementation; hence, top management is expected to ensure that all the information concerning strategic plans is at the disposal of all the employees. Moreover, governmental organizations need to focus on ways of improving their ability and on the methods they have to adopt to successfully implement new initiatives, services and strategies at both the business unit and corporate level (Poister 2010).

To attain the targeted strategic objectives, the entire staff of an organization is expected to be involved. Therefore, for the successful implementation of strategies, the lower level managers and non-management employees need to be adequately informed of the facts and issues regarding the implementation of strategies. Otherwise, a lack of consensus on the information affects several management levels and this creates barriers to the successful implementing of the strategic plan. Moreover, while strategy formulation is relatively easy, strategy implementation throughout an organization is more difficult. Although organizations may have formulated the best strategic plans, they may fail to achieve the desired outcomes because of improper strategy implementation (Plant 2009). Thus, poor

strategy implementation might be blamed for a number of strategic problems and failures, a fact which is confirmed in the findings of the quantitative analysis of most of the investigated governmental organizations in Bahrain currently under research.

4. Section Three: the Strategic Plan Evaluation Stage

It is worth noting that strategic planning evaluation is concerned with the evaluation of the strategy of the organization, the performance and its progress towards the stated vision and objectives. Strategic evaluation is a way of consolidating the needed experience to stay on top of the stakeholders' expectations and closely monitor the internal and external development to assure the excellence of the organizational efficiency, effectiveness and services (Poister 2010). As an important component of the strategic management approach, top management needs to identify and evaluate the gaps between the actual organizational performance and the strategic and operational objectives by linking its management performance system to the strategic plan (Plant 2009). Based on the findings of the quantitative analysis in the present research, the level of strategic plan evaluation is very low within the governmental organizations under investigation, with a percentage of 26.83% reported in Chapter Four. The current section, section three, discusses the elements of the strategic plan evaluation stage that includes linking strategic plan with performance management, reviewing performance data, monitoring organizational performance, monitoring external and internal trends, linking implementation with individuals' performance, sharing organizational performance with the public, frequent strategic plan evaluation, lower-level staff evaluation, middle

management evaluation, a solid reporting system and improvement of the current services. These elements are discussed in turn.

4.1 Linking Strategic Management with Performance Management

Based on the findings, most of the participants believe that their organizations made little effort to link strategic management with performance management systems. Such linkage would sometimes enrich strategic planning by clarifying and even discovering strategy. Performance management systems teach strategic planners to think strategically by identifying realistic expectations, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses in a given operating program. It seems that most of the researched organizations did not make the needed efforts to identify performance measures that monitored and may feed meaningful information into strategy reviews and updates. Without such linkage at all organizational levels, strategic planning will not be effective in the decision making process and may impair the purposeful movement of the organization into the future.

Moreover, to enhance the linkage between strategic management and performance management, capturing the knowledge and the experience of employees through effectively involving them in the design and implementation of a performance management system is recommended (Poister 2010). This involvement would generate effective organizational communications processes that would aid the analysis of measurement information in order to improve the process. Such involvement might be developed in three stages: developing the performance measurement system, creating the process of evaluating the measurement information and establishing continuous improvements teams. The involvement would create

buy-in among the staff towards the performance management system and would positively impact the business results (Poister 2010).

4.2 Reviewing Performance Data

The findings show that there is a very low agreement between respondents that top management in their organizations reviewed performance data on a regular basis. It seems that top management made little effort to review and evaluate the organizational performance for making decisions and taking corrective action to improve the organizational performance. This suggests that the top management of these organizations was not adequately securing a set of core and meaningful measures that was reviewed systematically at all levels to provide useful feedback on strategic and operational objectives and their outcomes. It is worth saying that performance measures are considered an indicator of the efficiency, effectiveness and productivity of the organization (Plant 2009; Poister 2010). Creating them is also considered an important phase in the development of a comprehensive strategic plan. Thus, reviewing organizational performance would help top managers to resolve and vary the strategic plan and enable them to actualize the strategic and operational objectives of the organizations. Moreover, it is important to note that reviewing organizational performance especially when evaluating the financial budgets would help organizations to make the needed budget cuts in times of economic downturn (Poister 2010).

4.3 Monitoring Performance, External and Internal Trends

The findings reveal a very low percentage of respondents who believed that the top management of their organizations monitored performance measures to ensure the proper implementation of the strategic plan.

Moreover, there is very little agreement among participants that top management monitored external and internal trends continuously and revised strategy if needed. It seems that the researched organizations have problems in monitoring performance and monitoring the internal and external trends. This would involve tracking the implementation progress and the achievement of initiatives and strategic objectives, hence, producing services that would exceed customers' expectations. Moreover, reviewing internal performance on a regular basis, as well as monitoring internal and external trends, would help organizations to refresh intelligence along the way, to revise strategic plans when needed, and to update efforts (Poister 2010).

4.4 Frequent Strategic Planning Evaluation

Few respondents accepted, according to the findings, that their organizations had proper strategic plan evaluation at regular intervals. This shows that the top management of these organizations was not properly ensuring a routine evaluation of the strategic plan. As a result, a strategy-to-performance gap might develop, which would create a culture of underperformance because the expectations of the strategic plans would not be achieved. Moreover, it could be assumed that top management in the researched organizations was not providing the needed efforts to critically analyze the capacity of the organization to perform its strategic plan. The lack of continuous evaluation of the strategic plan would prevent clear information about departmental efficiency, effectiveness and key accomplishments. It is important to note that continuous evaluation of the strategic management process would assist in facilitating annual work

planning by the organization and would quantify the capacity to achieve the strategic vision and objectives (Plant 2009).

4.5 Linking Implementation with Individuals' Performance

The findings reveal that there is a very low agreement between respondents that top management in their organizations linked the implementation of organizational objectives with individual performance appraisals. The findings also reported that very few respondents believed that the evaluation of lower-level staff and middle managers in their organizations was based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan. Top management also made little effort to evaluate the performance of middle management and lower-ranking staff, still less to link strategy implementation with their performance. However, there is an argument in the literature (Elbanna 2013; Plant 2009; Poister 2010) that to meet quality, efficiency and other operational requirements, the staff need to be empowered to evaluate their own work towards the implementation of their organizational strategic plan. Involving employees in evaluating their own work and performance would minimize the traditional focus on organizational structure and control systems and would encourage the introduction of positive behavioral and interpersonal attitudes such as motivation, commitment, learning and cultural adaptation.

It is worth noting that providing accurate and timely feedback to individuals about their performance would maintain their realistic view of it. This would help leaders to develop correction plans, support decision making, enhance productivity, design proper reward and incentive systems and thus improve organizational performance overall.

4.6 Solid Reporting System

In the researched organizations, very few respondents agreed that their organizations had a solid reporting system using adequate technology. The findings reflect the view that top management is not properly ensuring the internal sharing of information from all parts of the organization to aid the decision making process at all its levels. This suggests that top management in these organizations faces a serious challenge in securing adequate and timely performance information and this might lead to miscommunication about performance expectations. Having proper reporting systems tends to promote accountability and allows for decisions about resource allocation to be examined annually determining their effectiveness. Proper reporting systems also help to provide input into systems for performance appraisal and incentives and this motivates staff to support the organization's objectives.

4.7 Sharing Organizational Performance with the Public

The findings indicate that most organizations in the present research did not share their organizational performance with the public. It is worth keeping in mind that implementing a performance measurement system in the public sector is not as easy as it might appear, because of the presence of multiple objectives and services to a variety of clients with different needs and expectations in a rapidly changing environment (Poister 2010). This often generates conflicts about values and priorities. Moreover, sharing performance information with the public would encourage the media in certain situations to report on negative performance and results. These challenges might make it harder for top management to adapt to such complexities and share their organizational details with a wide range of

external stakeholders. However, the disclosure of performance information such as strategic plans, the content of annual reports, performance indicators, problems and success stories with the public would improve the accountability and the image of governmental organizations. Moreover, sharing organizational performance with a wide range of external audiences would not only maintain their appreciation, support and cooperation, but would let them feel as if they were partners in the process.

4.8 Current Improvement of Services

The findings show that respondents did not wholly agree that improving the current services offered by their organizations is a major part of their strategic plan. It is worth noting that one of the strategic objectives for most organizations is excellence in service. It seems from the findings that top managers in these organizations were not properly helping employees to provide a definition of service excellence and not adequately setting suitable indicators that would quantify whether their organizations had fulfilled this strategic objective. The findings also suggest that top management was not properly encouraging feedback mechanisms that would capture information from the front-line employees of the service divisions closest to the client in order to measure progress and improvement.

The increasing pressure on governments to deliver high quality services with limited resources requires these organizations to establish an adequate performance measurement system, so as to ensure a solid link between the higher-level decision making and the operational service providers (Poister 2010). Moreover, front-line employees have to play a critical role in this performance measurement system by being properly involved in developing performance measures for their service delivery process (Plant 2009).

To anticipate future challenges and to work effectively in uncertain situations in the coming decade, public sector organizations need to shift their performance measurement process to something more comprehensive (Poister 2010). To ensure this, public sector organizations are required to link strategic management more closely with performance management processes, to improve decision making and performance as a most important purpose of measurement and to report on their performance (Plant 2009). Moreover, for performance management to be effective and to improve performance, public organizations need to use the information produced by the measurement system and link it to the centralized performance systems at the levels of both managers and employees. Additionally, the top management of public organizations needs to set and negotiate the desired targets and results for employees in their performance appraisal systems. More generally, top managers are expected to review the performance data on a regular basis and develop plans as needed for corrective actions. At the same time, public sector organizations need to develop their strategic plans on the basis of the generated performance information that helps to measure and report progress toward the strategic goals and objectives and to consistently communicate performance information to a wide range of external stakeholders.

Thus, if their performance management is to be meaningful, public sector organizations are recommended to consider the performance management process at all the levels of an organization as the rule and not the exception and to ensure ongoing improvement in the performance of public programs. This is not found in most of Bahrain's public sector organizations surveyed in the present research.

At this point, the current research addresses the following research question:

Question 1: *How were strategic planning processes developed, implemented and evaluated in the public sector organizations of the Kingdom of Bahrain?*

The findings of the present research reveal that the strategic management process was not effective in the researched organizations at either the strategic formulation stage or the strategic implementation stage. The findings also reveal that the process is not effective at the strategic evaluation stage, which justifies the finding of Chapter Four that only 30% of all respondents were satisfied with the planning, implementation, outcomes and overall strategic management process of their organizations.

It is worth noting that most of the researched organizations failed to put their strategic plan into action or even link it to suitable methods of implementation. What appears from the findings is a gap between what was planned and what could be done. It should be noted that in the present research most of the Bahraini governmental organizations that were investigated had not succeeded in crafting a successful strategic management, for a number of reasons. The research revealed that top management was not playing an important role in the strategic management process, in its formulation, implementation and evaluation stages. The members of top management were not properly monitoring the strategic management process, in particular at the implementation stage and the integration of the vision with the operational goals and objectives was very poor. At the same time, the collaboration between top management and both middle management and front line staff was also very weak in the

formulating and implementation stages of the strategic management process and the internal communication in these organizations was weak, since mainly at the stage of strategy implementation each department was more concerned with its own interests than in participating properly. Moreover, the centralized organizational structure within most governmental organizations hardly helped the strategic implementation process to any great extent. In addition, the reward system did not encourage employees to effectively address the planned goals and objectives. Furthermore, the lower-grade staff involvement in the development of the strategic plan formulation was very weak: because the approach taken in formulation the strategic plan was top-down in direction, staff were not centrally involved in formulating their own goals and objectives and in turn were not motivated to own the strategic management process. It is also important to note that most of the governmental staff in Bahrain did not take proper steps to align their actions with their organization's goals and did not effectively handle its operational management.

It is worth saying that in most of the governmental organizations investigated in Bahrain strategic plan formulation is still viewed as a formal and linear approach based on top-down decision-making processes that involve mostly top and middle management while excluding lower management and other stakeholders. Such non-involvement is based on the idea that lower-level staff members are incapable and poorly trained. The non-involvement approach, however, may fail to ensure the commitment and ownership of the strategic management process on the part of the latter. Other challenges are the lack of staff motivation, of a well-defined appraisal system or good operational management: and the unwillingness by top management to

appreciate or listen to staff comments or suggestions, or value the work done. Additionally, the critical factors that influence the implementation of strategic plan in public sector organizations are: unclear vision, mission and goal; non-continuous environmental analysis; lack of managerial commitment: atop-down strategic management approach; too low a level of strategic management knowledge and skills among employees; weak support from the organizational culture; inappropriate organizational structure: inappropriate allocation of resources; missing or weak performance measure; and finally the lack of a strategic plan evaluation system.

5. Section Four: Transition to Strategic Management Approach

Section four discusses and seeks to answer the second research question:

Question 2: To what extent were public sector organizations broadening their strategic planning efforts into a strategic management approach?

Based on the data collected from nine interviewees who were Bahraini civil servants, including top managers, middle managers, and internal experts, it is worth noting that the findings of the qualitative analysis in the present research reveal that the strategic management process in the researched organizations is limited in terms of developing, implementing and evaluating their strategic plans. This because developing a strategic vision involving public and staff input is unpracticed; operational plans are seldom formulated and implemented; measuring and reporting results are infrequent; and developing and prioritizing the objectives aligned with the organizational vision need to have more time spent on them.

According to the findings of the qualitative analysis, as shown in Table 37, staffs were very hesitant to develop a strategic vision involving public and staff input. This reflects the belief of most participants in the interviews that their organizational vision was not altogether clear to all employees. Moreover, the majority of participants in the qualitative analysis stated that most of the internal employees in their organizations, lower level staff in particular, were not involved in the strategic planning effort at all, although top management had been central to it. As most participants said, the strategic planning process is in most cases conducted with a top-down approach: lower-ranking employees merely received the completed strategic and operational plans. Additionally, the findings revealed the claim by most of the participants that the external public was equally not involved at all in the strategic planning development process, the opposite of what is recommended in the strategic management literature.

It is worth noting that the qualitative findings in the present research indicated that nearly half the participants agreed that their organizations had developed unclear strategic objectives, unclear operational objectives, and unclear performance indicators. The ambiguity of the strategic and operational objectives will lead to difficulties in implementing the strategic plans. Additionally, the lack of clarity in the strategic and operational objectives, the performance indicators and the prioritization of the latter will confront top management when they begin to track the organization's success in achieving the desired strategic vision and objectives.

In terms of developing departmental operational plans and their implementation, the qualitative analysis revealed that the level of application of these within the governmental organizations under research is again low.

This low percentage is due to several factors, such as weak departmental operational plans aligned with the strategic plan, weak internal and external communications, inadequate development of strategic planning skills and knowledge, weak integration between vision and frontline operations, weak support from middle and top management, weak incentives, an inadequate organizational structure, improper implementation of strategic planning, and low commitment to the implementation of the strategic planning from most employees. To ensure a proper strategy implementation process, organizations need to analyze their organizational structure, organizational culture, power and conflicts. Moreover, successful implementation requires managers to have the right policies, allocate the needed resources, and receive up-to-date information that facilitates learning. In addition, effective communication is found to be one of the most important items in examining what is responsible for the successful implementation of strategic plans. These are the items that should properly explain the duties, tasks and new responsibilities devolving on employees.

The findings of qualitative analysis in the present research are that within the governmental organizations under investigation results are rarely and poorly measured and reported. This was due to several factors, such as a weak performance management process, and weak strategic planning evaluation. Top managers are expected to review the performance data on a regular basis and develop plans as needed for corrective action. At the same time, public sector organizations need to develop their strategic plans on the basis of the generated performance information that helps to measure and report progress toward the strategic goals and objectives, and to consistently

communicate performance information to a wide range of external stakeholders.

The findings of the qualitative analysis in the previous chapter reveal that the strategic management process in the researched organizations is limited with regard to developing, implementing and evaluating their strategic plans. Moreover, the qualitative findings revealed that most respondents judge the strategic planning process to be not meaningful because their organizations fail to identify and develop strategies which help to achieve the desired results and their organizations fail to put strategic plans into action and link them to suitable methods of implementation. The qualitative findings additionally revealed that top management was not playing an important role in the strategic planning process. This was because of the non-involvement in the approach, the lack of staff motivation, the weak appraisal system, unclear vision, mission, and objectives, the lack of managerial commitment, the top-down strategic planning approach, the weak support from the organizational culture, inappropriate organizational structure, the weak performance measures: and the lack of a strategic planning evaluation system.

Coding / Categories	Clear	Unclear	Adequate	Inadequate	High	Low	Not Applicable	Total Respondents
Strategic Planning Development								
Vision	3	6						9
Lower Staff Involvement					1		8	9
External Involvement					2	1	6	9
Strategic Objectives	5	4						9
Operational Objectives	5	4						9
Performance Indicators	5	4						9
Strategic Planning Implementation								
Financial Resources			5	4				9
Technological Resources			5	4				9
Organizational Structure			2	7				9
Reward Systems			2	7				9
Internal Communication			1	8				9
External Communication			4	5				9
Decision Making Process			2	7				9
Strategic Planning Evaluation								
Reporting Systems			2	7				9
Lower Staff Commitment					0	3	6	9
Middle Management Commitment					3	4	2	9
Corporation among Groups					2	2	5	9
Competition between Activities					3	5	1	9
Top Management Support					3	4	2	9
Cascading Plan Internally					2	2	5	9
Role Model Leadership					4	0	5	9
Performance Review					3	2	4	9
Planning Evaluation					2	3	4	9

Table 37: Interviews Coding / Categories

It is also important to note that, based on the findings of Chapter Four and as shown in Figure 7 below, the transition process from traditional strategic planning to a strategic management approach within the organizations under scrutiny is limited in all the strategic management stages: strategic formulation, strategic implementation and strategic evaluation.



Figure 7: Strategic Management Practices

While strategic management is considered the most critical and fundamental process by which public sector organizations may achieve their desired outcomes, most of the public sector organizations in Bahrain in the present research are not considered among the governmental organizations that have developed a fully-fledged strategic management process that properly integrates all the management processes and major functions for advancing the strategic agenda. Most of these governmental organizations are in addition not fully concerned to develop an effective capacity for the strategic management approach. However, the limited transition that has been observed may be a good sign that some of the governmental organizations under review are beginning to shift from traditional strategic planning practices to the strategic management approach.

It is important that public sector organizations need to address the critical task of shifting from strategic planning to a view of strategic management. This task consists of clarifying strategy and translating a broad vision into more operational terms: elaborating strategies in greater detail: assessing the implications of strategic mandates: revising budgets: and developing a control system with standard operating procedures. The transition from strategic planning to the concept of strategic management is essential if governmental organizations are to focus on the most appropriate objectives and to manage effectively to attain their objectives. Moreover, shifting to strategic management requires strong leadership to surmount bureaucratic and cultural barriers and guide public sector organizations in a purposeful direction to the future. Such strong leadership involves personal commitment from managers, to act as organizational entrepreneurs, make a dynamic fit between the organization and its environment, manage performance

effectively, welcome opportunities to manage for change and more importantly contribute to strategic development and implementation as the normal way of doing business in their sector. With this in mind, one of the findings of the present research was that most of the participants did not consider the top managers of their organizations to be role models of strong and inspiring leadership.

Most participants believed that the members of their top management team were not using strategic planning to drive their decision-making process and they did not welcome the chance to report their own performance. In addition, most participants believed that their top management was not modifying organizational structure, organizational culture, or human resources regulations to support the implementation of the current strategic planning. In other words, most participants believed that their top management was not playing an important role to ensure that strategy was translated into action.

Strategic management approach enables top management to identify and monitor suitable performance measures to ensure the proper implementation of strategic initiatives and proper achievement of strategic goals and objectives (Poister 2010). The interviewees' recommended assessing the performance data frequently to make modifications and to keep implementation on the desired track. They asked also to align budgets with strategic priorities and allocate resources to fund new strategic initiatives. However, most of the top managers in governmental organizations in Bahrain in the present research did none of these things. Additionally, these top managers were not linking the implementation of organizational goals and objectives with appraising the performance of individuals and did not

reward them in proportion to their contributions to advancing the strategy as far as possible. These top managers were not promoting the vision of their organizations or cascading the strategic plan internally to ensure proper commitment throughout the organization. Furthermore, most of the top managers were not committed to managing for results in order to shift their organizations from strategic planning to strategic management. The top managers of their organization, according to most participants, were not ensuring that each unit within the organization had its own strategic plan within the framework of the organization's overall strategic agenda. Neither were top managers insisting that action plans for implementing strategic initiatives should be developed to ensure that they were fulfilled to the end. Top management needs a separate strategy to drive decisions and actions in order to advance the strategic planning process more effectively. Top management needs to monitor the internal and external environment and gather information from a range of sources, sensing how values might be changed to ensure effective strategic management. Additionally, top management is expected to continuously monitor external trends as well as internal performance and then revise strategy if needed. Shifting from strategic planning to strategic management requires more collaboration with key external stakeholders to gather their valuable input. External stakeholders need to be invited to join the strategic plan formulation process so as to gain their support when moving strategic plans forward and to ensure that the results of strategic planning reflect its own substantive objectives as far as possible. Thus, top management need to buy in external stakeholders to ensure that the results of strategic planning reflect their organization's own substantive objectives as well as they can. Moreover, top

management is advised to assess and accommodate its organizational opponents to minimize their threats to the implementation of strategic plan. Additionally, top managers in public sector organizations need to update strategic plans and advance present priorities more effectively in order to survive in a changing and accelerating situation that might lead the organization to refocus its entire mission, move in new directions and substantially modify priorities. But in most of the governmental organizations investigated in Bahrain it does not do this. This is an answer to the second research question: that, in the present research, the progress of the transition by most public sector organizations in Bahrain, from traditional strategic planning to strategic management approach is limited.

6. Section Five: Practical Implications and Elements Related to Successful Strategic Management Approach

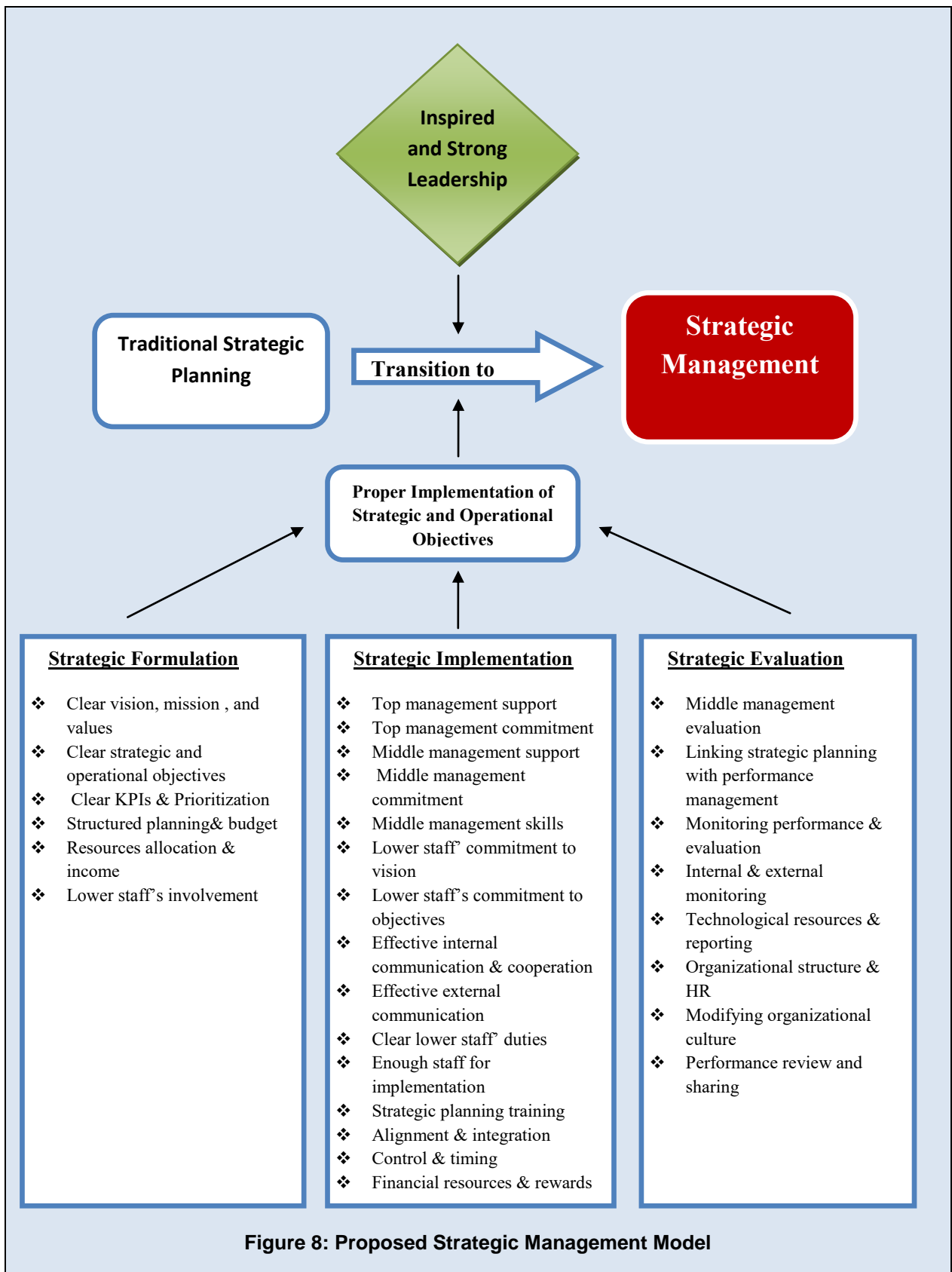
Section five considers the third research question:

Question 3: What are the practical implications for policy makers and practitioners of strategic planning in the Kingdom of Bahrain?

Strategic management aims to ensure that strategy is effectively implemented and continually encourages strategic thinking, learning and action. On this basis, management levers such as operational budgets and other management and administrative mechanisms, need to work hard to implement strategic initiatives, to advance the strategic agenda of the organization and to move it deliberately to the future. In this case, since a transition from strategic planning to the approach of strategic management is essential for governmental organizations if they are to focus on the most appropriate objectives and to manage effectively to achieve these

objectives, this section discusses the practical implications of the research for policy makers and practitioners of strategic planning in Bahrain. It discusses in some detail the strength of the relationship between the proper implementation of strategic and operational objectives and the other important strategic management variables that help to achieve these objectives. It is hoped thus to discuss the variables that are closely related to the transition from strategic planning to strategic management. Such leading edge variables might help governmental organizations to strive for the more comprehensive strategic management approach. It should be noted that these variables need not necessarily be interpreted as the most fundamental requirements of an effective transition from strategic planning to strategic management. They should rather be viewed as leading edge elements and practical implications for policy makers and practitioners that help to create a path leading to the strategic and operational objectives of the government's strategic plan, helping policy makers and practitioners in governmental organizations to successfully shift from traditional strategic planning to this preferable approach.

With this in mind, according to the quantitative findings in Chapter Four, the following strategic management model is proposed, as shown in Figure 8.



The above model sub-divides the variables that are closely related to the transition from strategic planning to a strategic management approach in its three stages, namely, strategic formulation, strategic implementation and

strategic evaluation. Moreover, the proposed model reflects the fact that inspiring and strong leadership is considered one of the variables that are closely related to the transition from strategic planning to strategic management. The proposed strategic management model is discussed below.

6.1 Elements Related to the Strategic Plan Formulation Stage

It should be remembered that the findings of the quantitative analysis of the present research reported that there is a moderate positive relation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and such variables as developing a clear vision; having a clear mission statement; developing clear strategic objectives, clear operational objectives, clear performance indicators, and prioritized performance indicators; following a structured process by means of a planning manual; developing an operational plan for each unit; developing an allocated fixed budget for each activity; allocating the resources needed for new initiatives; allocating new income generation plans; involving lower-ranking staff.

Developing a clear organizational vision with clear strategic and operational objectives will give governmental staff at all levels a clear idea of their future direction. Developing clear vision would be useful for organizations that want to guide employees clearly in their duties and to reduce conflict between members of staff and between departments. It is also worth repeating that involving lower-ranking staff in the strategic development stage would ensure their loyalty to the process. Moreover, when a public organization clearly prioritizes its performance indicators and properly aligns its vision with lower staff operations, this helps to fulfill the desired initiatives, goals and objectives and enhance its performance.

However, even though the participants in the research appreciated the above elements of a successful strategic plan formulation stage, they did not put the elements at the top of their list of elements for the successful implementation of strategic and operational objectives. It may be inferred from the findings that many participants in the research would provide the needed effort to fulfill the organization's objectives even if they were not fully involved in the development process in terms of developing the vision, the performance indicators, the planning manual and other action and income plans. It may also be assumed that these participants might take part in the achievement of the strategic and operational objectives with minimum resources and with acceptable technologies. According to the findings, the above scenario might materialize if the top management ensured that other important elements were provided that related closely to successful implementation, such as adequate training, commitment and support from top and middle management. If this is indeed the case, top management should be expected to acknowledge such a spirit and make use of it to activate strategies leading to efforts to change. It may be recalled that such findings partially contradict the literature review, because governmental organizations advised the adoption of a structured process to effectively achieve the strategic and operational objectives: they need to use a planning manual, develop an operational plan for each unit, align a fixed financial budget to each operational objective, develop new income generation plans, allocate the resources needed to fund new strategic initiatives and provide adequate financial and technological resources. Additionally, in the literature, organizations are expected to establish initial agreement with internal employees at the beginning of the strategic plan formulation stage. Such

agreement would specify strategic planning and explain the reason for undertaking it, the steps of the planning process, the desired outcomes, roles and responsibilities and the strategy for allocating resources. The agreement would be expected to generate such benefits as the recognition of employees, effective internal communication and cooperation, access to the needed resources and the certainty of top management support in the transition period.

6.2 Elements Related to the Strategic Implementation Stage

According to the quantitative data analysis in Chapter Four, the findings of the present research indicate that there is a strong positive relation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and variables such as top management commitment to vision, top management decisions linked with vision, a results-oriented top management and top management support.

Governmental organizations need to have visible members of top management who provide the required support and are committed in terms of vision, time and energy at the implementation stage, focusing on the desired results and outcomes. Managing for results requires top management to ensure that all divisions and business units have their own business plans in order to translate strategies into actions. Additionally, in order to provide accountability for results, top management needs to assign the greatest responsibility for implementation to middle management or operating units to flesh out and oversee the implementation at all organizational levels.

According to the data analysis, the findings also indicate that there is a strong positive relation between the proper implementation of both strategic

and operational objectives and variables such as middle management support, middle management commitment to vision, and proper middle management skills. Although middle managers in governmental organizations are spending most of their time and effort on short-term activities and leaving long-term ones to top management, who prefer a centralized approach to strategic management, it is worth noting that strong middle management commitment and support to the implementation of the strategic plan will encourage lower-ranking members of staff to fulfil their obligations and responsibilities in achieving operational objectives because they will feel as though they own or are committed to the strategic management process. Moreover, the involvement of skilled middle managers in the strategic planning process would improve organizational performance, because they play a crucial central role in implementing strategic management and can inform top management about operational performance. Hence, they prepare an organization for the future, maximize the use of its resources, help in strategic decision making, identify suppliers and customers' problems, perform strategic activities and adapt to changes in its circumstances.

Moreover, the findings reported that there is a strong positive relation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and variables such as integration and cooperation between the formulation and implementation groups. To effectively implement strategic plans, top management are asked to play a major role not only in the formulation stage, but also in the implementation stage of the strategic planning process. Top management need to effectively integrate the several activities of the different departments within the organization to help carry

out the organizational mission through the best integration of processes, structures, resources and people. In terms of effective cooperation between the formulation and implementation groups, top management is expected to outline clear duties, authorities and methods of communication between the two groups. The tight relationship and collaboration between the formulation and implementation groups would minimize conflicts and would encourage knowledge sharing and evaluation between the planning and the actual outcomes.

Additionally the quantitative findings of the present research revealed that there is a strong positive relation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and such variables as adequate training in strategic management and understanding the strategic management process before implementation. If governmental organizations want to implement strategic and operational objectives effectively, they are expected to secure adequate training in strategic planning, knowledge of the strategic plan on the part of lower-ranking staff, clear duties for these people and a general understanding of the strategic planning before it is implemented. Moreover, it should be recalled from the literature, as noted before, that countries have lately begun to value a service-based economy, where services are considered central to creating value. For this reason, frontline employees play a critical role in the success of private or public service organizations, since they link the external stakeholders with the operations inside the organization. Thus, to ensure the firm engagement of employees, it is vital to increase the level of frontline staff involvement in strategic planning. On this basis, employees need to be trained in various issues concerning the implementation of strategic plans and should be allowed to

fully participate from the beginning of the formulation of strategy to the evaluation of the strategic plan. This will help to ensure that all the employees are involved in making decisions on both the formulation and the implementing of strategic plans. It is also important that middle management should combine several skills, such as effective communication, problem solving capabilities, program delivery mechanisms, legislative and leadership skills and the ability to influence others via the networks of their organization in order to properly implement both strategic and operational objectives.

It should also be remembered that the findings of the quantitative analysis of the present research reported in addition that there is a moderate positive relation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and such variables as effective internal communication, internally cascading strategic plans, effective cooperation between departments, effective cooperation with key stakeholders, proper control over implementation, a vision aligned with lower-ranking staff' operations, enough time for implementation, adequate technological resources, integration, no competition between activities, allocating a fixed budget to each activity, an adequate organizational structure and lower-ranking staff' commitment to attaining objectives.

Based on the above findings, the entire organization is expected to be involved if it is to achieve the targeted organizational strategic and operational objectives. Therefore, for the successful implementation of strategies, the lower-level managers and the non-management employees need to be adequately informed of the facts and issues regarding the implementation of strategies. Otherwise, a lack of consensus on the

information will affect several management levels and this creates barriers to the successful implementing of the strategic plan. Moreover, effective communication, as noted above, is considered among the most frequently mentioned items responsible for the successful implementation of a strategy. Therefore management needs to properly explain the duties, tasks and new responsibilities that will devolve on employees. Close cooperation and coordination within an organization are also needed between people who have different functions and areas, to optimize the use of knowledge and to enhance the creativity needed for problem solving. This being the case, sharing communication and understanding among all the employees is a crucial aspect of the strategy implementation process: hence, top management needs to ensure that all the information concerning strategic plans is at the disposal of all the employees. Moreover, involving different stakeholders in the strategic planning process is very important for bridging the gap between intentions and action and implementing the strategic plans for the desired initiatives, goals and objectives.

Additionally, and based on the findings of Chapter four regarding the strategic plan implementation stage, when measuring the quality of strategic plan implementation in the researched organizations by comparing the mean of 11 strategic plan implementation variables, as shown in Table 38, it seems that respondents ranked 11 variables that can be considered leading edge variables and practical implications to policy makers and practitioners for effectively implementing governmental strategic plans.

No	Ranking I Variables	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean
1	We have effective communication with the public.	12.59	17.78	31.11	31.48	7.04	3.06
2	There is effective internal collaboration between most departments.	14.44	20.37	28.52	31.48	5.19	2.93
3	The lower-ranking staffs are committed to attaining our organizational objectives.	11.11	27.41	31.85	25.56	4.07	2.84
4	Operational objectives are implemented properly.	9.63	26.67	37.41	24.81	1.48	2.82
5	Our vision is aligned with lower-ranking staff operations.	15.93	28.52	25.19	25.19	5.19	2.75
6	Strategic objectives are implemented properly.	10.74	29.26	40.00	18.15	1.85	2.71
7	We have effective internal communication among all employees.	16.67	29.26	25.56	25.19	3.33	2.69
8	Our strategic plan is well understood before any significant actions are taken.	15.93	20.52	31.11	20.37	4.07	2.68
9	We have enough staff for strategic planning implementation.	20.37	30.74	23.33	20.74	4.81	2.59
10	The duties, tasks and responsibilities are properly explained to the lower-ranking staff.	20.37	36.30	21.85	20.00	1.48	2.53
11	There is enough training for employees.	20.37	30.00	30.74	17.41	1.48	2.49

Table 38: Quality of Strategic Plan Implementation

Having effective external communication with the public, public sector organizations would have the opportunity to understand and identify the exact needs of target groups. Hence, they would design proper strategic and operational objectives that could be implemented adequately, and then produce high quality services to meet or even exceed public' expectations. Moreover, having effective internal collaboration between departments would allow the easy flow of information and access to it that would help departments to fulfill their key performance indicators and implement the

operational plan properly. It is also clear from the findings that respondents considered lower-level staff commitment to attaining the organization's objectives to be a key variable that promotes the quality of implementation of the strategic plan. Without such commitment there is no way to achieve the agreed operational and strategic objectives that according to respondents are both also considered key variables for enhancing the quality with which the organization's strategic plan is implemented. Additionally, the findings reported that aligning vision with lower staff operations would give the respondents a clear view of the future direction, and would also help them to accurately adjust their operations in alignment with the vision of the organization, thus, enhancing the quality of implementation.

Having effective internal communication between all employees and understanding strategic plans before their implementation would also in the view of participants increase the quality of strategic plan implementation. Having this in mind, the employees would be ready for any unexpected changes during implementation, and would also be ready to solve current and potential problems.

Additionally, according to the respondents, assigning enough staff for implementation would reduce the pressure among employees and help to implement the operational and strategic objectives as scheduled. At the same time, explaining the tasks and duties clearly to lower staff would reduce conflicts and will clear their roles in the implementation process. Moreover, providing proper training to lower-ranking staff would also enhance the quality of strategic plan implementation because it would equip them with the knowledge and skills that help to achieve the organization's objectives.

6.3 Elements Related to the Strategic Evaluation Stage

It is important to recall that the quantitative findings of the present research also indicate a strong positive relationship between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and the linking strategic planning with performance management. The findings also report a moderate positive relation between the proper implementation of both strategic and operational objectives and such variables as middle management performance evaluation, monitoring performance, the proper and frequent evaluation of strategic plan, a solid reporting system that links implementation with an individual's performance, reviewing performance data continuously, the sharing of organizational performance with the public, evaluating top management's performance, modifying regulations on human resources and modifying the organizational structure.

However, although the above findings are supported in the literature and were appreciated by the researched organizations, participants still considered their priority to be that of linking strategic management with performance management at all organizational levels. Although strategic management identifies performance measures that bring important information to strategy reviews and updates of effort, it is not yet systematically linked to performance management systems at the level of managing and operating the program, since many public sector organizations do not closely connect strategic management and performance management. Without such linkage, accordingly, strategic management might generate poor decisions and improper actions that would prevent the organization from moving effectively into the future. Thus, public

managers need to properly integrate strategy with performance management to much greater advantage.

To this end, top managers need to ensure that strategic plans are linked directly to performance management systems at each organizational level in order to re-direct their strategic planning to a strategic management approach. Moreover, to ensure a proper linkage between strategy and performance management and to improve performance, top managers are expected to be able to help employees to make use of change, to remove barriers, to redesign the organizational structure, to develop a productive culture, to secure additional resources and to institute new arrangements for service delivery. Hence, it is worth noting that the comprehensive performance management of public sector organizations needs to be oriented in part to advancing the overall strategy by using the performance information to improve performance and to implement strategies effectively.

It is also important that organizations, to ensure a proper strategy implementation process, need to analyze and develop their organizational structure, organizational culture, power and conflicts and receive up-to-date information that facilitates learning. This would enable organizations to significantly increase their capacity to meet new challenges and create public value over the decade to come.

According to the findings of Chapter four regarding the strategic plan evaluation stage, when measuring the quality of strategic plan evaluation in the researched organizations by comparing the mean of 7 strategic plan evaluation variables as shown in Table 39, the respondents ranked 7 variables as possible leading edge variables, which can effectively evaluate

strategic governmental plans; they have practical implications for policy makers and practitioners.

No	Variable	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Mean
1	Top management has no problem in reporting on its performance.	17.78	20.74	32.59	24.07	4.81	2.77
2	Top management reviews performance data on a regular basis for making decisions and taking corrective action to improve the organizational performance.	17.41	23.33	34.07	20.00	5.19	2.72
3	Top management monitors external trends and internal performance continuously and revises strategy if needed.	18.15	25.93	31.48	21.11	3.33	2.66
4	Top management links the implementation of organizational objectives with individual performance appraisals.	20.74	25.93	29.26	18.15	5.93	2.63
5	Top management monitors performance measures to ensure the proper implementation of strategic plan.	18.52	27.78	29.63	20.74	3.33	2.63
6	Our strategic planning process is closely linked with the performance management processes at all organizational levels.	16.30	27.78	35.93	16.67	3.33	2.63
7	Our organization is communicating its performance information to a wide range of external stakeholders on a regular basis.	31.48	27.78	25.19	10.74	4.81	2.30

Table 39: Quality of Strategic Plan Evaluation

Evaluating top management performance according to the findings is ranked by respondents as one of the primary key variables that enhance the quality of strategic plan evaluation. It is worth noting that this would enhance the transparency and credibility of organizations, for it would end the fear of discussing their own performance freely with others. The environment thus created would help in critically evaluating and reviewing individuals' performance and consolidate relationships among all employees from top management to lower-ranking staff. Moreover, the respondents in the present research reported that reviewing organizational performance continuously and monitoring internal and external trends are also considered

key variables that enhance the quality of strategic plan evaluation. By adopting them, organizations would have the opportunity to take prompt corrective action and allocate different resources whenever needed. Reviewing performance regularly and monitoring internal and external trends would also help organizations to cope with a changing environment and adapt to it effectively.

Additionally, the findings revealed that linking the implementation of organizational objectives with individuals' performance is reported by respondents as one of the key variables that would raise the quality of strategic plan evaluation. It is important to note that such variables would lay the foundation for motivating staff and financially rewarding them, thus, clearly identifying employees' role in the achievement of operational and strategic objectives. Finally, the respondents reported that linking their organizational strategic plan with performance management systems and sharing the performance of the organization with external stakeholders are among the key variables that would ensure the quality of the strategic plan evaluation. Having an effective performance management system would produce high quality information about the exactly which individuals were responsible for the organizational performance. Such information might be compared with the agreed targets to determine suitable corrective actions. Sharing the organizational performance with the external public, as mentioned above, would enhance widespread trust and ensure support during and after the implementation of the strategic plan.

6.4 Elements Related to Inspiring and Strong Leadership

The findings of the present research reveal that there is a very strong positive relation between inspiring and strong role model leaders and three

related variables, namely, top management's ensuring process integration: top management's commitment to vision: and top management support. There is a close relationship between strategic and operational objectives and these core leadership variables, found in inspiring leaders who are strong role models, help to carry out the chosen strategy. Hence these variables are likely to be closely related to the completeness of the transition from strategic planning to strategic management.

It seems from the findings that most participants considered that the above three variables are the most important considerations in the list of variables related to strong and inspiring leaders. The integration between processes, structures, resources and people, as noted above, is considered one of the key components of successful strategic implementation by management. Such integration enhances the relationship between leaders and their subordinates, who feel that their leaders are doing their best to equip them with the needed resources and to facilitate the working processes and procedures. For strategic planning to be effective, leaders are expected to be fully committed to the vision of their organization. This helps its employees to change whatever needs changing and encourages effective partnership throughout the strategic management process by converting intentions to actions. In this way, a living strategic plan is created to direct the organization towards attaining its service delivery goals and objectives. This also encourages employees to do the same and be more committed to their organizational vision. Moreover, leaders are expected to provide full support to employees and middle management from the earliest formulation of the plan and all through its implementation. Proper personal and financial support from top leaders would enhance their image as role model

leaders among the employees. In this case, employees would be fully encouraged to fulfill their obligations and even forgive top management for their failures and mistakes.

The findings of the present research show too that there is a strong positive relation between inspiring and strong role model leaders and two further related variables: results-oriented top management and the modifying of the organizational culture. In addition, the findings of the present research show that there is a moderate positive relationship between inspiring and strong role model leaders and the following seven related variables: the evaluation of top management's performance, modifying the organizational structure, monitoring internal and external trends, modifying human resources regulations, linking implementation with individuals' performance, continuously reviewing performance, allocating needed resources and internally cascading the strategic plan to all levels within the organization.

To effectively implement strategic plans, top management need to play a major role not only at the formulation stage, but also at the implementation stage of the strategic management process (Poister 2010). Top management asked for the effective conjunction of the activities in various departments within the organization to help carry out the organizational mission through the best possible integration of processes, structures, resources and people. For an implementation process to be effective, moreover, members of top management are expected to set a good example and be viewed as role models of strong and inspiring leadership. Leaders in the public sector are considered important for the future of the country. As leaders, they are also expected to be creative and take the best decisions even when the strategies are different and unusual.

In order to provide high quality services, they need to be willing to accept risk and be able to respond quickly to changing conditions (Plant 2009; Poister 2010).

Generally speaking, in the findings of the present research, although they appreciate other related variables, as mentioned above, most of the participants put the following variables at the top of their list for the successful transition from traditional strategic planning to the strategic management approach. The variables that are closely related to this transition are inspiring and strong leadership, commitment to vision among the top management, links between the top management decisions and vision, top management commitment to managing for results, top management support, middle management commitment to vision, proper middle management skills, integration between processes, structures, resources and people, cooperation between formulation and implementation groups, adequate training for strategic management, understanding the management process and proper implementation and linking strategic management with performance management. It is particularly worth noting that these variables are expected to increase the satisfaction level in the governmental organizations under scrutiny. This is because linking top management decisions to strategic management and providing the needed support from inspiring and strong leaders to governmental staff will ensure positive outcomes and long-term growth and sustain competitive advantage. Moreover, for strategic implementation to be effective and to increase the satisfaction level, leaders need to ensure that governmental staff use planning manuals and have the needed strategic management knowledge and skills before and during the implementation stage. Additionally, to

implement organizational objectives, especially operational ones, and also to enhance the satisfaction level, leaders are expected to ensure having adequate cooperation and coordination between formulation and implementation groups as an effective tool to strategic management. The satisfaction level would be also enhanced if leaders reviewed the organizational performance continuously to provide the needed resources and make the right adjustments to achieve the agreed outcomes of the plan. Moreover, linking implementation with performance management will provide employees with a clear idea of their duties and responsibilities, and hence a clear idea of their role in the implementation of the organizational objectives. This will lead to fair rewards and compensation that will enhance staff' motivation and commitment. However, the findings indicated that there is a very weak negative relation between gender and both strategic and operational objectives. This reflects the fact that the organizations in question provide equal opportunities and roles in achieving organizational objectives for their male and female employees. The findings also make it clear that there is a very weak negative relation between organizational size and the strategic and operational objectives. This reflects the fact that the implementation of organizational objectives is independent of the size of the organization. This finding on the one hand contradicts the literature: many authors have argued that larger organizations plan more than smaller ones do because they have more resources and more capacity to recognize environmental change. Thus, they are more likely to achieve their organizational objectives. On the other hand, this finding is supported in the literature, since smaller organizations with smaller staff tend to have a more effective process of internal communication and greater opportunity to

involve their employees in the development of their strategic and operational objectives, thus increasing their commitment to achieving these objectives.

The findings moreover show that there is a very weak negative relation between managerial level and the working experience of both strategic and operational objectives. This is true only when the researched organizations make great efforts to develop and train the staff to engage in strategic plan formulation, implementation and evaluation. It is also true if these organizations enhance the communication and cooperation between staff, teams and departments. It might be assumed from this finding that the participants in the present research would provide the needed efforts to achieve the strategic and operational objectives if they were equipped with sufficient strategic management knowledge and skills, despite their lack of experience and regardless of their positions in the organizational hierarchy.

Moreover, the findings interestingly reported that there is a weak positive relation between both strategic and operational objectives and the importance of strategic planning by middle management and lower-ranking staff. This finding contradicts the argument that the more employees appreciate the strategic management, the greater their loyalty and buy-in to implementing the plan. However, it seems from the findings that the participants in the present research would effectively participate in attaining the strategic and operational objectives, despite their own low importance in strategic management. This result may be due to personal factors such as self appraisal, or cultural factors such as patriotism. Whatever the source, this result may open a window to future researchers interested in studying this surprising phenomenon.

The findings also reported that there is a weak positive relation between both strategic and operational objectives and variables such as the involvement of internal and external consultants, the private sector and the external public in effective external communication. Although these variables were appreciated in the literature as successful variables for implementing organizational objectives, it could be argued that the participants in the present research feel that these variables are not as important as other variables, such as top and middle management support, adequate training and adequate performance management systems. It could also be argued that participants prefer not to have highly involved external stakeholders, so as to reduce their influence and control over the implementation. This view is supported by several authors in the literature, who recommend not involving the external public, or only partially involving it in the processes of strategic formulation and implementation. The findings moreover suggest that there is a weak positive relation between both strategic and operational objectives and variables such as enough staff for implementation and lower-ranking staff' being committed to the organization's vision. Although these variables were addressed in the literature as important drivers for the successful implementation of objectives, it can be assumed that participants were not addressing them as top requirements; other variables such as lower-ranking staff' involvement in formulating objectives and lower-ranking staff' commitment to achieving those objectives seemed more important. If this is the case, top management would meet with resistance from lower-ranking staff to the achievement of organizational objectives, if they were not fully aware of the vision or not involved in developing it. Moreover, it seems from the findings that participants would effectively try to fulfill the organizational

objectives even there were not enough of them to do so adequately. This result may reflect the fact that participants have no problem with working under intense pressure. It is worth saying that top management need to consider this as one of the key success factors in implementing strategic management decisions.

Interestingly, the findings additionally reported that there is a weak positive relation between both strategic and operational objectives and the availability of adequate financial resources. As mentioned before, securing a fixed budget for each activity and initiative would tend to help organizations to properly fulfill their strategic and operational objectives. This is found in the literature, for budgeting is considered a cornerstone in the successful implementation of strategic management. However, it can be assumed from the findings that participants were not considering the availability of financial resources as a serious challenge and they are committed to achieving objectives even with limited financial resources. More interestingly, the findings also reported that there is a very weak positive relation between both strategic and operational objectives and the availability of adequate reward systems. It is worth noting that, as mentioned above and confirmed in the literature, developing an adequate reward system would enhance the loyalty of employees and their motivation to successfully achieve both the strategic and the operational objectives of their organization. Nonetheless, it seems from the findings that most participants in the current research would provide the requisite efforts to achieve their objectives even under weak reward systems. Such a result may be due to cultural or personal motives and also suggests a worthwhile avenue for future research.

7. Conclusion

Strategic management up to the next decade requires to play a more critical role than at present. If public sector organizations want success in the coming decade, they will have to anticipate new challenges and problems, effectively respond to them, think strategically and manage for results. The next decade requires public sector organizations to shift from traditional strategic planning to more strategic management approach.

It seems from the literature that previous research has focused almost exclusively upon developed countries such as the USA and the UK, as well as some emerging economies such as China, and not on developing countries in the Arab world, for instance, the Kingdom of Bahrain. This gap in the knowledge provides the justification for the present research. It is also important to note that the main objective of the research proposed here is to investigate strategic management practices in public sector organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. More specifically, this research explores the strategic formulation, implementation, and evaluation process in governmental organizations in Bahrain, and then the research explores the elements that are related to successful strategic management approach in these organizations.

To meet the research objectives and to answer the research questions, the current research adopts structured interviews at an exploratory stage in order to get a feel for the key issues in the strategic management practices of the government organizations in Bahrain before using a questionnaire to collect descriptive data. The present research also adopts a descriptive design to provide information about the behavior, attitudes, and other characteristics of governmental employees in the public sector of Bahrain.

The sample population in this research came from low and high-ranking officials in the country's governmental organizations. As a survey instrument, non-probability sampling was used in the qualitative data collection with structured interviews, and probability sampling was also used in the quantitative data collection with a questionnaire. The survey strategy in a form of cross-sectional research was more appropriate in the present research than other research strategies because it could help the present researcher to examine the relationships between the variables and to suggest and produce a model of these relationships.

The findings of the present DBA research have several practical implications for public-sector policy makers and managers. Based on the analysis and the findings of the research, it seems that the strategic management process was not effective in the researched organizations in the strategic formulation stage, the strategic implementation stage, or the strategic evaluation stage. This was found even though half of all participants indicated that the top management, middle management, and lower-ranking staff in their organizations see strategic management as beneficial and consider it to be critical to their organization's success. The average was low in the three stages because most of the governmental organizations that were investigated had developed their strategic vision with low and limited involvement from the internal and external audience. Moreover, these organizations did not adequately prioritize their strategic goals and initiatives and did not properly align them with their vision; they did not adequately align their business plan with the organizational strategic plan; and they did not properly measure performance or adequately report their results.

Furthermore, the findings of the present research revealed that there is a low satisfaction level with the formulation, implementation, outcomes and strategic management process within their organizations, because the involvement of lower-grade staff in the formulation of the strategic plan was tenuous. The approach that was taken when formulating the strategic plan was top-down instead of bottom-up and therefore they were not centrally involved in formulating their own goals and objectives. This omission tends to lower the employees' understanding of the organization's activities and does little to ensure their commitment, ownership or willingness to attain its goals and objectives, thus, not improving the working environment and not securing good practical implementation. Most of the participants were not satisfied, also, because the efforts of their organizations to engage in strategic planning were not meaningful, through failing to identify and develop the strategies which help to achieve the desired results: they also failed to put strategic plans into action and link them to the methods of implementation. Moreover, most of the participants were not satisfied because the organizational structure in their organization was centralized and not amenable to proper communication. In addition, most of the participants were dissatisfied because their organizations were not using adequate technology and lacked a sound reward system.

The present research also revealed that the average amount of progress in the transition from strategic planning to strategic management approach in most of the organizations surveyed was limited, in that most of the top managers were not committed to managing for results, and they played no critical role in shifting their organizations from strategic planning to strategic

management. However, some of the organizations were found to be at the start of such a transition and this may be a good sign.

The present research reported that many strategic management variables are closely related to this transition. Such variables should be viewed as leading edge elements and practical implications that help to successfully implement the strategic and operational objectives of governmental strategic plans, thus helping these organizations to successfully apply the strategic management approach. Additionally, as noted above, part of the present research objectives has been to gauge the progress of the transition from strategic planning to the strategic management approach. Building on the hopeful sign that some organizations were already starting the transition process, it is proposed to extend this approach to the public sector organizations of the country in order to ensure that their strategic plans are part of a strategic management framework. Another part of the purpose is to ensure the execution and implementation of Bahrain's strategic plan and vision for the year 2030, thus improving performance in the public sector and the quality of life for its citizens.

To implement strategies effectively, it is essential to move from traditional strategic planning to the approach to strategic management which involves continuously managing the overall strategic agenda of an organization. To complete this move, it would be interesting in future research to study the transition from performance measurement to performance management, and to study the integration of strategy and performance management in public sector organizations.

This DBA research claims to be innovative because in the literature so far, no doctoral research has been conducted in the field of strategic

management in the public sector of Bahrain. This research will be the first of its kind because it is one of the first studies to focus on these processes with reference to the new strategy of Bahrain for 2030. Moreover, the primary intended contribution of the present research is to help address the sparseness of empirical evidence and practical implications on strategic management, so as to increase the ability of policy makers, strategic planners, and practitioners to formulate and implement better strategic plans in the future.

However, in viewing research findings, a researcher should be aware of their limitations. The first limitation was using cross-sectional data, which might limit the attempt to generalize the findings of the present research, because it tends to ignore the time-frame for carrying out the strategic plan, which is generally between three and five years. The second limitation was addressing the perceptions of the respondents rather than the analysis of strategic management at the organizational level, since the perceptions of respondents may be different from the nature of the practices themselves; hence, such limitations could be seen as an avenue for future research. But, despite these limitations, the present research is believed to shed some light on strategic management practices of the public sector organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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9. Appendixes

9.1 A1: Questionnaire - English

Research on Strategic Management Practices in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Instructions for completing the Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

This survey is designed to investigate the strategic management practices in governmental organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain, so that we can scientifically improve these practices.

If you would like to receive a summary of the results of this research, please provide your e-mail address below.

E- mail:

Your responses will be completely *ANONYMOUS* and *CONFIDENTIAL* and will be used only for *RESEARCH PURPOSES*.

Thank you in advance for your kind co-operation.

Wajdi Abu Shabab

Doctoral Candidate – Bradford University School of Management

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Part one: Strategic Plan Formulation

Question (1): Please, identify to what extent you agree or disagree with each one of the following statements in relation to the situation within your organization. Please tick the appropriate number.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	We have a clear vision.	1	2	3	4	5
2	We have a clear mission statement.	1	2	3	4	5
3	We have clear organizational values.	1	2	3	4	5
4	We have clear strategic objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
5	We have operational objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
6	We have developed clear performance indicators.	1	2	3	4	5
7	We have clearly prioritized our performance indicators.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Staffs in lower grades have been involved in strategic planning development.	1	2	3	4	5
9	The internal advisors have played a significant role in strategic planning development.	1	2	3	4	5
10	The external consultants have played a significant role in strategic planning development.	1	2	3	4	5
11	We have adequate financial resources for strategic planning.	1	2	3	4	5
12	We have adequate technological resources for strategic planning.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Our strategic planning procedures can be described as largely structured with using planning manual.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Developing new ways of raising income is a major part of our strategy.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Our organization welcomes private-sector involvement and partnership with others.	1	2	3	4	5

Part two: Strategic Plan Implementation

Question (2): Please, identify to what extent you agree or disagree with each one of the following statements in relation to the situation within your organization. Please tick the appropriate number.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Our vision is aligned with lower staff operations.	1	2	3	4	5
2	There is a link between strategic planning and the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Our strategic plan is well understood before any significant actions are taken.	1	2	3	4	5
4	We have effective internal communication among all employees.	1	2	3	4	5
5	We have effective communication with the public.	1	2	3	4	5
6	There is effective internal communication and collaboration between most departments.	1	2	3	4	5

7	We have enough staff for strategic planning implementation.	1	2	3	4	5
8	There is enough training for employees.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Strategic objectives are implemented properly.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Operational objectives are implemented properly.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Divisional managers have the right knowledge and skills for strategic planning.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Lower-ranking employees are familiar with strategic planning.	1	2	3	4	5
13	The duties, tasks and responsibilities are properly explained to the lower staffs.	1	2	3	4	5
14	The lower staffs are committed to attain our organizational objectives.	1	2	3	4	5

Question (3): Please, identify to what extent you agree or disagree with each one of the following statements in relation to the situation within your organization. Please tick the appropriate number.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Top management set good role models of strong and inspired leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Top management ensures the best possible integration of processes, structures, resources and people.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Top management is committed to the implementation of our vision.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Top management supports us in the implementation of the strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Middle management is committed to the implementation of our vision.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Middle management supports us in the implementation of the strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
7	The lower level staffs are committed to attain our organizational vision.	1	2	3	4	5
8	We have a solid reporting system using adequate technology.	1	2	3	4	5
9	The reward systems encourage success.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Improving our current services is a major part of our approach.	1	2	3	4	5

Part three: Strategic Plan Evaluation

Question (4): Please, identify to what extent you agree or disagree with each one of the following statements in relation to the situation within your organization. Please tick the appropriate number.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	The evaluation of middle managers is based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The evaluation of lower staffs is based largely on their contribution to the successful accomplishment of the strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5

3	Top management sees strategic planning as critical to an organization's success.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Middle management sees strategic planning as critical to an organization's success.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Our lower employees believe that strategic planning is beneficial.	1	2	3	4	5
6	There is proper relationship between the groups for formation and those for implementation.	1	2	3	4	5
7	There is enough time for strategy implementation.	1	2	3	4	5
8	We have proper control over the implementation stage.	1	2	3	4	5
9	We have proper strategic planning evaluation at regular intervals.	1	2	3	4	5
10	There is no competition between activities.	1	2	3	4	5
11	We have proper organizational structure that aids strategic implementation.	1	2	3	4	5

Part Four: Transition process from strategic planning to strategic management

Question (5): Please, identify to what extent you agree or disagree with each one of the following statements in relation to the situation within your organization. Please tick the appropriate number.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Key external stakeholders have been involved in developing our strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
2	We have a solid collaborative relationship with key external stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5
3	All the units within our organization have developed their own operational plans.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Top management is committed to managing for results.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Top management uses strategic planning to drive the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Top management aligns a fixed financial budget to each operational objective.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Top management allocates the needed resources to fund new strategic initiatives.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Top management cascades the strategic plan internally all the way down the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Top management links the implementation of organizational objectives with individual performance appraisals.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Top management monitors performance measures to ensure the proper implementation of strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Top management monitors external trends and internal performance continuously and revises strategy if needed.	1	2	3	4	5

12	Top management reviews performance data on a regular basis for making decisions and taking corrective action to improve the organizational performance.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Top management has no problem in reporting on its performance.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Top management has made some changes in organizational structure to support the strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Top management has made some changes in human resource practices to support the strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Top management has tried to modify organizational culture to make it more compatible with the strategic plan.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Our organization is communicating its performance information to a wide range of external stakeholders on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Our strategic planning process is closely linked with the performance management processes at all organizational levels.	1	2	3	4	5

Part Five: Satisfaction of Strategic Management

Question (6): Please, answer the following statements by ticking the appropriate box in relation to the current situation within your organization.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I am satisfied with my organization's strategic management process.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am satisfied with the implementation of strategic and operational objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am satisfied with my organization's strategic management outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am satisfied with the time, cost, and efforts spent in strategic management.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am satisfied with the quality of services delivery because of strategic management.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I am satisfied with the overall organizational improvement as a direct result of strategic management process.	1	2	3	4	5

Part Six: Please, provide us with the following information:

1. Number of full time employees	Approximately:	
2. Your managerial level	<input type="checkbox"/> Top management	<input type="checkbox"/> Middle management
	<input type="checkbox"/> Expert	<input type="checkbox"/> Employee
3. Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
4. Number of years at organization	Mention number of years:	

Thank you for your time and efforts in completing this survey.

Wajdi Abu Shabab

9.2 A2: Questionnaire - Arabic

دراسة عن ممارسات الإدارة الإستراتيجية في القطاع الحكومي بمملكة البحرين

للإدارة الاستراتيجية دور مهم في تحسين كفاءة وفعالية المؤسسات الحكومية، ومن ثم رفع كفاءة الأداء وزيادة رضا المتعاملين عن الخدمات المقدمة لهم. وعليه فإن هذا المشروع البحثي من رسالة الدكتوراه، يهدف إلى دراسة ممارسات الإدارة الإستراتيجية للقطاع الحكومي في مملكة البحرين، وذلك بهدف عمل توصيات تساهم في تحسين هذه الممارسات على أسس علمية سليمة.

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على ملخص لنتائج هذه الدراسة، يرجى كتابة بريدك الإلكتروني:

-----: البريد الإلكتروني:

علما بأنه سيتم استخدام البيانات المقدمة في هذا الاستبيان لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط، وسيتم التعامل معها بمنتهى السرية مع ضمان عدم كشف هوية المشاركين.

شكرا لتعاونكم معنا.

وجدى عبد السلام أبوشباب

طالب دكتوراه في كلية الإدارة بجامعة برادفورد – بريطانيا

Email: wajdi@career-me.com – telephone: 0097333318731

أولاً: إعداد الخطة الإستراتيجية

س1: أرجو تحديد درجة موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك لكل من العبارات التالية بالتطبيق على المؤسسة التي تعمل بها.

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا رؤية مستقبلية واضحة.
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا رسالة مؤسسية واضحة.
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا قيم مؤسسية واضحة.
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا أهداف إستراتيجية واضحة.
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا أهداف تشغيلية واضحة.
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا مؤشرات أداء واضحة.
1	2	3	4	5	تم تحديد أولويات واضحة لمؤشرات الأداء.
1	2	3	4	5	يشارك موظفو الإدارات السفلى في إعداد خططنا الإستراتيجية.
1	2	3	4	5	يقوم المستشارون الداخليون بالمؤسسة بدور هام في إعداد خططنا الإستراتيجية.
1	2	3	4	5	المستشارون الخارجيون لهم دور هام في إعداد خططنا الإستراتيجية.
1	2	3	4	5	تم تخصيص موارد مالية كافية لعملية التخطيط الإستراتيجي.
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا تكنولوجيا حديثة ملائمة لعملية التخطيط الإستراتيجي.
1	2	3	4	5	يتم إعداد الخطة الإستراتيجية بطريقة منهجية وباستخدام دليل تخطيط.
1	2	3	4	5	تطوير طرق جديدة لزيادة الدخل يعتبر جزءاً رئيسياً من خططنا الإستراتيجية.
1	2	3	4	5	ترحب مؤسستنا بمشاركة القطاع الخاص والشراكة مع الآخرين.

ثانياً: تطبيق الخطة الإستراتيجية

س2: أرجو تحديد درجة موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك لكل من العبارات التالية بالتطبيق على المؤسسة التي تعمل بها.

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	
1	2	3	4	5	يتم ربط عمليات موظفي الإدارة السفلى برؤية المؤسسة.
1	2	3	4	5	هناك ترابط بين الخطة الاستراتيجية وعملية اتخاذ القرارات.
1	2	3	4	5	يتم فهم خططنا الإستراتيجية بشكل جيد قبل القيام بتطبيقها.
1	2	3	4	5	هناك تواصل فعال بين كل العاملين في المؤسسة.
1	2	3	4	5	هناك تواصل فعال مع الجمهور الخارجي.
1	2	3	4	5	هناك تواصل فعال وتعاون بين كل الإدارات المختلفة في المؤسسة.
1	2	3	4	5	لدينا عدد كاف من الموظفين لتطبيق الخطة الإستراتيجية.
1	2	3	4	5	المشاركون في تطبيق الخطة الإستراتيجية لديهم التدريب المناسب.
1	2	3	4	5	يتم تطبيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية بشكل ملائم.
1	2	3	4	5	يتم تطبيق الأهداف التشغيلية بشكل ملائم.
1	2	3	4	5	رؤساء الأقسام لديهم المهارة الكافية لتطبيق الخطة الإستراتيجية.
1	2	3	4	5	موظفو الإدارات السفلى لديهم المعرفة المناسبة لتطبيق الخطة الإستراتيجية.
1	2	3	4	5	تم توضيح المهام والمسؤوليات بشكل مناسب لموظفي الإدارة السفلى.
1	2	3	4	5	موظفو الإدارة السفلى ملتزمون بتحقيق أهداف المؤسسة.

س3: أرجو تحديد درجة موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك لكل من العبارات التالية بالتطبيق على المؤسسة التي تعمل بها.

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	
1	2	3	4	5	الإدارة العليا تمثل نموذجاً يحتذى به كقيادة قوية وملهمة.
1	2	3	4	5	الإدارة العليا تعمل على تأمين أفضل ترابط بين الأفراد والعمليات المختلفة.

3	الإدارة العليا ملتزمة بتطبيق رؤية المؤسسة.	1	2	3	4	5
4	الإدارة العليا تساعدنا بشكل كبير في تطبيق الخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
5	الإدارة الوسطى ملتزمة بتطبيق رؤية المؤسسة.	1	2	3	4	5
6	الإدارة الوسطى تساعدنا بشكل كبير في تطبيق الخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
7	موظفو الإدارات السفلى ملتزمون بتطبيق رؤية المؤسسة.	1	2	3	4	5
8	لدينا نظام تقارير فعال يعتمد على تكنولوجيا حديثة.	1	2	3	4	5
9	النظام المالي والحوافز يشجع الموظفين على تطبيق الأهداف والمبادرات.	1	2	3	4	5
10	تحسين خدماتنا الحالية يعد جزءا رئيسيا من استراتيجيتنا.	1	2	3	4	5

ثالثا: تقييم الخطة الإستراتيجية

س4: أرجو تحديد درجة موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك لكل من العبارات التالية <u>بالتطبيق على المؤسسة التي تعمل بها.</u>						
		لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
1	يتم تقييم الإدارة الوسطى لمدى مساهمتها في تحقيق الخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
2	يتم تقييم موظفو الإدارة السفلى لمدى مساهمتهم في تحقيق الخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
3	ترى الإدارة العليا أن التخطيط الإستراتيجي يعد أمرا جوهريا لنجاح المؤسسة.	1	2	3	4	5
4	ترى الإدارة الوسطى أن التخطيط الإستراتيجي يعد أمرا جوهريا لنجاح المؤسسة.	1	2	3	4	5
5	يعتقد موظفو الإدارة السفلى أن التخطيط الإستراتيجي مفيد للمؤسسة.	1	2	3	4	5
6	هناك تعاون وتنسيق بين فريق اعداد الخطة الاستراتيجية وفريق تطبيقها.	1	2	3	4	5
7	هناك وقت كافى لتطبيق الخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
8	هناك رقابة مناسبة لعملية تطبيق الخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
9	يتم تقييم الخطة الإستراتيجية بشكل فعال من وقت لآخر.	1	2	3	4	5
10	لا يوجد تنافس بين الأنشطة المختلفة للخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
11	لدينا هيكل تنظيمي ملائم يدعم عملية تطبيق التخطيط الاستراتيجي.	1	2	3	4	5

رابعا: مدى التحول من التخطيط الإستراتيجي إلى الإدارة الاستراتيجية

س5: أرجو تحديد درجة موافقتك أو عدم موافقتك لكل من العبارات التالية <u>بالتطبيق على المؤسسة التي تعمل بها.</u>						
		لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	محايد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
1	يشارك الجمهور الخارجي في عملية إعداد وتطوير خطتنا الإستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
2	لدينا علاقات تعاون قوية مع أهم المؤسسات الخارجية.	1	2	3	4	5
3	كل الوحدات داخل مؤسستنا أعدت خطط تشغيلية خاصة بها.	1	2	3	4	5
4	الإدارة العليا ملتزمة بتحقيق النتائج المتفق عليها سابقا.	1	2	3	4	5
5	الإدارة العليا تستخدم الخطة الإستراتيجية في عملية اتخاذ القرارات.	1	2	3	4	5
6	الإدارة العليا تخصص ميزانية محددة لكل هدف تشغيلي.	1	2	3	4	5
7	الإدارة العليا تخصص الموارد اللازمة لتمويل المبادرات الجديدة.	1	2	3	4	5
8	الإدارة العليا تنشر الخطة الاستراتيجية في كل الأقسام.	1	2	3	4	5
9	الإدارة العليا تربط تطبيق أهداف المؤسسة بعملية تقييم الأداء للأفراد.	1	2	3	4	5
10	الإدارة العليا تقيس الأداء للتأكد من تطبيق الخطة الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5
11	الإدارة العليا تراقب المتغيرات الخارجية والداخلية دوريا لتطوير الاستراتيجية.	1	2	3	4	5

5	4	3	2	1	الإدارة العليا تراجع بيانات الأداء دوريا لاتخاذ القرارات والإجراءات التصحيحية لتطوير الأداء في المؤسسة.	12
5	4	3	2	1	الإدارة العليا لا مانع لديها من تقييم الأداء الخاص بها.	13
5	4	3	2	1	الإدارة العليا تقوم بتطوير وتعديل الهيكل التنظيمي لدعم الخطة الإستراتيجية.	14
5	4	3	2	1	الإدارة العليا تقوم بتعديل بعض الإجراءات في الموارد البشرية لدعم الخطة الإستراتيجية.	15
5	4	3	2	1	الإدارة العليا تقوم بنشر ثقافة مؤسسية بناءة وداعمة للخطة الإستراتيجية.	16
5	4	3	2	1	يتم إبلاغ الجمهور الخارجي دوريا بنتائج مقاييس الأداء للخطة الإستراتيجية.	17
5	4	3	2	1	الخطة الاستراتيجية مترابطة بشكل قوي مع عملية إدارة الأداء في كل المستويات الإدارية بالمؤسسة.	18

خامسا: مدى الرضا عن الخطة الاستراتيجية

س6: أرجو تحديد درجة الرضا أو عدم الرضا لكل من العبارات التالية <u>بالتطبيق على المؤسسة التي تعمل بها.</u>					
راض بشدة	راض	محايد	غير راض	غير راض بشدة	
5	4	3	2	1	1 درجة الرضا عن عملية التخطيط الإستراتيجي في مؤسستي.
5	4	3	2	1	2 درجة الرضا عن تطبيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية في مؤسستي.
5	4	3	2	1	3 درجة الرضا عن عملية تطبيق الأهداف التشغيلية في مؤسستي.
5	4	3	2	1	4 درجة الرضا عن المخرجات النهائية لمؤسستي.
5	4	3	2	1	5 درجة الرضا عن جودة الخدمات التي نقدمها في مؤسستي.
5	4	3	2	1	6 درجة الرضا عن التطور العام لمؤسستي كنتيجة لعملية التخطيط الإستراتيجي.

سادسا: معلومات عامة

أرجو توفير البيانات التالية:	
1	ما هي الفترة التي تغطيها خطتكم الإستراتيجية؟ أذكر عدد السنين:
2	عدد الموظفين الدائمين بمؤسستكم تقريبا:
3	إسم مؤسستك
4	مستواك الإداري <input type="checkbox"/> إدارة عليا <input type="checkbox"/> إدارة وسطى <input type="checkbox"/> أخرى
5	الجنس <input type="checkbox"/> ذكر <input type="checkbox"/> أنثى
6	عدد سنوات عملك في المؤسسة أذكر عدد السنين:

شاكرين حسن تعاونكم

الباحث/ وجدي أبو شهاب

B1: Interview - English

Name of participant:
Position:

Organization:
Date:

Section 1: Strategic plan formulation

No	Question	Answer
1	To what extent your organization has developed clear vision, mission, and values statements?	
2	To what extent your organization has developed clear strategic goals and objectives, and performance indicators?	
3	To what extent the lower staffs have been involved in strategic planning development? And why?	
4	To what extent the external stakeholders have been involved in strategic planning development? And why?	
5	To what extent your organization has developed an appropriate organizational structure? Please give real examples.	
6	To what extent your organization has adequate financial and technological resource for the strategic planning process?	

Section 2: Strategic plan implementation

No	Question	Answer
7	To what extent your organizational vision is guiding decision making at all levels? Please give real examples.	
8	To what extent there is an effective internal communication among all employees? Please give real examples.	
9	To what extent there is an effective internal communication with external public? Please give real examples.	
10	To what extent the internal staffs are commitment to attain the goals and objectives? Please give real examples.	
11	Do you think that top management sets a good as a role model of strong and inspired leadership? And why?	
12	To what extent top management supports employees in the implementation of organizational objectives? Please give real examples.	

13	To what extent middle management is commitment to the implementation of the strategic plan? Please give real examples.	
14	To what extent your organization has a solid reporting system using adequate technology?	
15	To what extent the reward systems at your organization are providing incentives for success? Please give real examples.	

Section 3: Strategic plan evaluation

No	Question	Answer
16	To what extent There is proper relationship between the groups for formation and those for implementation?	
17	To what extent There is proper strategic planning evaluation at regular intervals?	
18	To what extent there is there is competition between activities?	

Section 4: transition from Strategic planning to Strategic Management

No	Question	Answer
19	To what extent top management promotes the vision of the organization and cascades the strategic plan internally all the way down the organization. Please give real examples.	
20	To what extent top management reviews performance data on a regular basis for making decisions and taking corrective action to improve the organizational performance.	

Section 5: Satisfaction

No	Question	Answer
21	To what extent you are satisfied with your organization's strategic planning process. And why?	

Section 6: Additional Points

No	Question	Answer
22	From your own perspective, would you please identify any additional points about strategic planning that would add value to this research?	

B 2: Interview Arabic

المقابلات الشخصية

اسم المشارك:

المسمى الوظيفي:

الجهة:

التاريخ:

القسم الأول : إعداد الخطة الاستراتيجية

الرقم	السؤال	الإجابة
1	إلى أي مدى في مؤسستك تم تطوير رؤية ورسالة وقيم بشكل واضح؟	
2	إلى أي مدى في مؤسستك تم تطوير أهداف استراتيجية وتشغيلية ومؤشرات أداء بشكل واضح؟	
3	إلى أي مدى تم إشراك الموظفين من المستويات المختلفة في عملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي وخصوصا موظفي الإدارة السفلى؟ ولماذا ذلك؟	
4	إلى أي مدى تم إشراك الجمهور الخارجي في عملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي؟ ولماذا ذلك؟	
5	إلى أي مدى في مؤسستك تم تصميم الهيكل التنظيمي لمساعد في تحقيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية والتشغيلية؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
6	إلى أي مدى تمتلك مؤسستك موارد مالية وتكنولوجية ملائمة لعملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي؟	

القسم الثاني: تطبيق الخطة الاستراتيجية

الرقم	السؤال	الإجابة
7	إلى أي مدى تتم عملية اتخاذ القرارات في كل المستويات الإدارية وفقا لرؤية المؤسسة؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
8	إلى أي مدى هناك تواصل فعال بين كل العاملين في المؤسسة؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
9	إلى أي مدى هناك تواصل فعال مع الجمهور الخارجي للمؤسسة؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
10	إلى أي مدى العاملين الداخليين ملتزمين بتحقيق أهداف المؤسسة؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
11	هل تعتقد أن الإدارة العليا تمثل نموذجا يحتذى به كقيادة قوية وملهمة؟ ولماذا؟	
12	إلى أي مدى الإدارة العليا تساعد في تطبيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية والتشغيلية لمؤسستك؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
13	إلى أي مدى الإدارة الوسطى ملتزمة بتطبيق الخطة الإستراتيجية؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
14	إلى أي مدى مؤسستك لديها نظام تقارير فعال يعتمد على تكنولوجيا حديثة؟	
15	إلى أي مدى النظام المالي والحوافز يشجع الموظفين على تطبيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية والتشغيلية لمؤسستك؟ أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	

القسم الثالث: تقييم الخطة الاستراتيجية

الرقم	السؤال	الإجابة
16	إلى أي مدى هناك تعاون وتنسيق بين فريق اعداد الخطة الاستراتيجية وفريق تطبيقها؟	
17	هل يتم تقييم الخطة الإستراتيجية بشكل فعال من وقت لآخر؟ ولماذا؟	
18	إلى أي مدى هناك تنافس بين الأنشطة المختلفة للخطة الاستراتيجية؟	

القسم الرابع: التحول من عملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي إلى المفهوم الشامل للإدارة الاستراتيجية

الرقم	السؤال	الإجابة
19	إلى أي مدى الإدارة العليا تدعم رؤية المؤسسة وتنشر الخطة الاستراتيجية في كل الأقسام. أرجو ذكر أمثلة واقعية.	
20	إلى أي مدى الإدارة العليا تراجع بيانات الأداء (دوريا) لاتخاذ القرارات والإجراءات التصحيحية لتطوير الأداء في المؤسسة.	

القسم الخامس: درجة الرضا عن عملية الإدارة الاستراتيجية

الرقم	السؤال	الإجابة
21	إلى أي مدى أنت راض عن عملية التخطيط الاستراتيجي الخاصة بمؤسستك؟ ولماذا؟	

القسم السادس: معلومات اضافية

الرقم	السؤال	الإجابة
22	من وجهة نظرك، هل هناك نقاط هامة إضافية عن التخطيط الاستراتيجي تريد ذكرها مما تقدم قيمة مضافة لهذا البحث؟	